DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 249 223 SP 025 351

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TITLE Working with Support Personnel.
INSTITUTION Minnesota Univ., Minneapolis. National Support Systems Project.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (ED), Washington, DC. Div. of Personnel Preparation.
PUB DATE May 83
GRANT OEG007902045
NOTE 103p.; For other modules in this series, see ED 238 844 and SP 025 332-354. For the genesis of these modules, see ED 186 399. Reviewed by Steven Apter and Marleen Pugach.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Cooperative Planning; Higher Education; *Human Resources; Individual Differences; Individualized Education Programs; Learning Modules; *Mainstreaming; Preservice Teacher Education; Shared Services; Special Education Teachers; Student Needs; *Teacher Education Curriculum; *Teacher Educators
IDENTIFIERS Education for All Handicapped Children Act

ABSTRACT

This module (part of a series of 24 modules) is on collaboration among school personnel in teaching handicapped students and using human resources in schools to develop responsive programs. The genesis of these materials is in the 10 "clusters of capabilities," outlined in the paper, "A Common Body of Practice for Teachers: The Challenge of Public Law 94-142 to Teacher Education." These clusters form the proposed core of professional knowledge needed by teachers in the future. The module is to be used by teacher educators to reexamine and enhance their current practice in preparing classroom teachers to work competently and comfortably with children who have a wide range of individual needs. The module includes objectives, scales for assessing the degree to which the identified knowledge and practices are prevalent in an existing teacher education program, and self-assessment test items. A bibliography and articles on cooperative planning for the education of handicapped students are appended. (JD)

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ED249223

WORKING WITH SUPPORT PERSONNEL

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MAY 1983

SP 025 357

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Minneapolis, Minnesota

1982

Development. Materials are developed under direction of the National Support Systems Project, University of Minnesota, under the Grant No. referenced above.

Distribution. This resource unit is available as part of a set through The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), Suite 610, One Dupont Circle, Washington, DC 20036. For individual copies, contact Special Education Programs, 259 Burton Hall, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455. For information on costs and availability, please contact the appropriate office.

Extending the Challenge:
Working Toward a Common Body of Practice for Teachers

Concerned educators have always wrestled with issues of excellence and professional development. It is argued, in the paper "A Common Body of Practice for Teachers: The Challenge of Public Law 94-142 to Teacher Education,"* that the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 provides the necessary impetus for a concerted reexamination of teacher education. Further, it is argued that this reexamination should enhance the process of establishing a body of knowledge common to the members of the teaching profession. The paper continues, then, by outlining clusters of capabilities that may be included in the common body of knowledge. These clusters of capabilities provide the basis for the following materials.

The materials are oriented toward assessment and development. First, the various components, rating scales, self-assessments, sets of objectives, and respective rationale and knowledge bases are designed to enable teacher educators to assess current practice relative to the knowledge, skills, and commitments outlined in the aforementioned paper. The assessment is conducted not necessarily to determine the worthiness of a program or practice, but rather to reexamine current practice in order to articulate essential common elements of teacher education. In effect, then, the "challenge" paper and the ensuing materials incite further discussion regarding a common body of practice for teachers.

Second and closely aligned to assessment is the developmental perspective offered by these materials. The assessment process allows the user to

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*Published by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Washington, DC, 1980 ($5.50).

view current practice on a developmental continuum. Therefore, desired or more appropriate practice is readily identifiable. On another, perhaps more important dimension, the "challenge" paper and these materials focus discussion on preservice teacher education. In making decisions regarding a common body of practice it is essential that specific knowledge, skill and commitment be acquired at the preservice level. It is also essential that other additional specific knowledge, skill, and commitment be acquired as a teacher is inducted into the profession and matures with years of experience. Differentiating among these levels of professional development is paramount. These materials can be used in forums in which focused discussion will explicate better the necessary elements of preservice teacher education. This explication will then allow more productive discourse on the necessary capabilities of beginning teachers and the necessary capabilities of experienced teachers.

In brief, this work is an effort to capitalize on the creative ferment of the teaching profession in striving toward excellence and professional development. The work is viewed as evolutionary and formative. Contributions from our colleagues are heartily welcomed.

This module is one in a series of modules. The series is intended for use by teacher educators to prepare all teachers to work competently and comfortably with children who have a range of individual needs. The genesis of the modules is in ten "clusters of capabilities" that are outlined in the paper, "A Common Body of Practice for Teachers: The Challenge of Public Law 94-142 to Teacher Education." The "clusters" form the proposed core of professional knowledge needed by teachers who will practice in the world of tomorrow. Each module provides further elaboration of a specified "cluster of capabilities"--in this case, working with support personnel.

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Narrative (Knowledge Base). Collaboration between regular classroom teachers and support personnel is important. Exchanges of ideas and materials can be professionally stimulating. When goals and expectations are shared among adults working with a particular child, progress can be more rapid. Group problem-solving can increase morale and improve the quality of life in a school. In some situations, collaboration is required. Federal legislation now mandates collaboration among educators and	1

parents on behalf of children with special needs. Whether collaboration is voluntarily sought or legally mandated, it is not an automatic or simple process. This module highlights three areas where collaboration seems particularly challenging: during the information-gathering phase of the child's assessment; during the team planning meeting when decisions about programs are made; and in the program implementation phase, when limited time and resources constrain the services provided.

Schools are being asked to provide additional services to children during an era when budgets are being reduced and staff are being cut. Now the challenge of working effectively with support personnel has two components: learning to collaborate within the structures for providing services that we have evolved; and conceptualizing with colleagues new structures for collaboration that will be effective in meeting the needs of children as resources become increasingly limited. This module, then, encourages teachers in training to understand our current problems in collaboration, to develop skills in communication and problem-solving, and to conceptualize new ways of using and developing resources.

Class Activities. Suggestions of activities which illustrate and extend the content of the module are provided. These activities should be adapted in any way that meets the requirements of the training program and the style of the teacher. They may also serve simply as a stimulus or examples of activities which might be used by the teacher educator. 27

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Materials and articles which support the content of this module are found in the appendices.

Objectives of the Module

Upon completion of this module, the teacher educator will be able to prepare students to:

1. Identify the roles and functions of the support personnel found in most school systems.
2. List several factors which interfere in achieving collaborative relationships between classroom teachers and support personnel.
3. Improve their skills in listening, giving feedback, resolving conflicts, and joint problem-solving.
4. Identify the requirements for improving collaboration in a school system.
5. Describe a variety of non-paid resources who can be helpful to the classroom teacher.
6. Suggest several ways of utilizing existing resources more efficiently.

Reasonable Objectives for Teacher Education

Students in teacher training programs should have knowledge and practical skills in the following areas related to working with support personnel:

1. Understanding the many reasons for working with support personnel in assessing, planning and implementing programs for handicapped children.
2. Knowing factors which impede collaboration in many school systems, such as lack of time for meetings and unfamiliarity with other specialities.
3. Maintaining clear communication with colleagues through the use of techniques such as listening, conflict resolution and problem-solving.
4. Understanding the responsibilities of professionals who provide services to children within the school and in the community.
5. Being able to locate and utilize resources as required, including non-paid resources.
6. Being able to analyze one's own values, goals, and expectations for children; contrast them with those of other educators, and recognize the importance of this factor in understanding environments that work for children with special needs.

Rating Scale for the Teacher-Training Program

Check the level that best describes your present teacher education program on the topic of working with support personnel.

_____ 1. Students receive no systematic instruction in working with support personnel.

_____ 2. Students receive instruction in the legal requirement to work with support personnel, but learn little of the roles of the various support staff members.

_____ 3. Students receive classroom instruction on the need to work with support staff and on the roles performed by various support staff members.

_____ 4. Students are instructed in factors which impede collaboration among representatives of different disciplines. They have opportunities to interview teachers, specialists, and parents who participate in collaborative decision-making and to observe team planning meetings and consultations between teachers and specialists.

_____ 5. Students receive instruction in techniques for working with support personnel. They practice communication skills and porblem-solving skills in practice sessions and student teaching. They are formally monitored for their ability to communicate effectively with support personnel.

Self-Assessment

As a check of your familiarity with the material in this module, try the following:

1. Who is required to participate in a team planning meeting according to P.L. 94-142?
2. What types of professionals are permitted to attend a team planning meeting?
3. List five factors that interfere with effective collaboration during team planning meetings.
4. According to the available research, who tends to be most influential in making decisions during team planning meetings?
5. What are the problems associated with failing to integrate a child's special education and regular education programs?
6. Identify several ways to utilize resource personnel more effectively.
7. What strategies can help to negotiate conflicts between individuals and groups?
8. What is the sequence of stages in effective problem-solving?

Answer-Key for Self-Assessment

1. Participants must include the child's teacher (regular and/or special), parent(s) or guardian, and a representative of the public school or agency (other than the child's teacher) who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of special education. In addition, if the child is being evaluated for the first time, the person conducting the student's evaluation or a person knowledgeable in the interpretation of the data needs to be included.
2. The child may be included, as appropriate. The law allows specialists who provide supportive services to children such as school psychologists, speech pathologists, learning disabilities specialists, resource teachers, and physical or occupational therapists. Specialists in evaluation (psychologists or medical personnel) might be invited. Also included might be those providing social work services or parent counseling and training. Advocates for the parent(s) and/or agency are also discretionary.
3. Factors which interfere with collaborative problem-solving include:
   a. Asking for help may reveal a deficit or diminish one's status with peers.
   b. Insufficient time is generally allotted to share information and develop appropriate programs.
   c. Participants often do not know each other well and are unfamiliar with the specialty areas represented.
   d. Individuals may be uninformed about group dynamics and unable to analyze problems in the group's functioning.

e. The dominant mode of assessment underutilizes the knowledge of teachers and support personnel.

f. Those who are in roles of authority may be more active and influential in making decisions than those who must implement them.

g. Territoriality may loom larger than the needs of the child or group.

h. Methods for sharing and recording information may be inefficient and time-consuming.

i. Parents often seek a program which will provide the child with optimal services, while school personnel confronted with limited resources seek adequate programs.

4. Special education directors and school psychologists tend to be most influential while parents and classroom teachers are least influential.

5. Failure to integrate a child's regular and special education programs can lead to fragmentation of the child's time, inefficient use of school and community resources, undue concentration on the child's deficits, limited progress on academic and social skills and frustration for the parents and the professionals as well as the child.

6. Allow support personnel to provide more indirect services (consultation, inservice education) to teachers. Coordinate existing services better. Identify additional resources, including non-paid personnel such as volunteers and peer tutors. Exchange resources within and across agencies or schools. Change inadequate or incomplete programs.

7. See Activity 6.

8. See Activity 8.

WORKING WITH SUPPORT PERSONNEL

Teaching has traditionally been a lonely profession. When a teacher shuts the door to her classroom, she develops the schedule, plans the curriculum, manages behavior problems, and adapts lessons to meet the academic and social needs of the students. Typically, there is little sharing or joint problem-solving with other adults. And typically, teachers enjoy this autonomy but also miss the association and support of their colleagues.

Since 1978 (with the implementation of P.L. 94-142) teachers have been faced with a new challenge: the integration of children with mild to moderate handicaps into their classrooms. It is a challenge that cannot be effectively met without collaboration with other professionals and parents. This collaboration can be productive for the children and contribute to the stimulation and professional growth of the teacher. It can also be inefficient, unproductive, or unpleasant.

The purposes of this module are to assess why collaboration is essential in teaching handicapped children and worth the effort for the regular classroom teacher. We shall explore why collaboration often does not occur and make suggestions for initiating and improving the classroom teacher's use of resource personnel. The final sections explore how we can better utilize human resources in schools and develop more creative and responsive programs for children. An ecological or systems perspective will be used in this analysis.

The Importance of Collaboration

Let us examine in a more detailed way why collaboration is important to

the classroom teacher. First, no teacher can be expected to be equally effective with every child. Individual patterns of temperament, learning style, ability and motivation among the children may sometimes perplex or annoy us, and an outsider's perspective may be useful in understanding our reactions to a particular child. Secondly, there are many different types of special needs, with specialized assessment and teaching methods appropriate to each. Most teachers' preservice training included minimal, if any, exposure to this information. Using the expertise of specialists can enhance one's professional growth as well as improve the learning and adjustment of children with special needs. The acquisition of new teaching skills may benefit non-handicapped children as well.

A third reason for collaboration is to reduce the frustration most teachers feel about sending children to various specialists throughout the day without understanding the specialists' goals for the children. Movement of many children in and out of class can result in fragmentation of both the children's programs and the teacher's overall plans for the class. When specialists work with children in the regular class or share curriculum and techniques with teachers, fragmentation is reduced. Finally, collaboration among colleagues across disciplines can strengthen relationships, improve the climate of the school and enhance opportunities for successful problem-solving on a range of issues.

Identifying Resource Personnel

There are many individuals with areas of expertise that could be helpful to a classroom teacher. In this section, the roles and functions of the support personnel most commonly encountered in schools are identified.

When working with children with mild to moderate special needs, one is likely to work with a resource teacher. A resource teacher generally spends the majority of his/her time providing direct services to children in a resource room or in the classroom. Direct service includes analysis of the students' needs and strengths, remedial or developmental teaching and management. Consultation to other teachers and to parents are additional components of the job. Children assigned to resource rooms usually spend a portion of their school day with other teachers, such as the regular classroom teacher (or major subject teachers for older children) and special subject teachers (art, music, physical education).

The generic teacher is a position developed in some states primarily to aid the regular class teacher in teaching children with mild handicaps. Consultation, demonstration, and inservice training are her primary responsibilities. Perhaps 20-30% of the generic teacher's job is devoted to direct service (assessment, teaching, management in individual sessions or small groups). Another important role is coordination of the child's overall program with the parents and all members of the child's educational team.

In many states, children are likely to be placed in categorically based self-contained classrooms supervised by a teacher with expertise in one or more handicapping conditions, such as learning disabilities/disorders, emotional/behavior problems, mental retardation, or physical handicaps. Children are usually mainstreamed or integrated from these rooms into regular classrooms as their skills increase. These teachers have knowledge within their specialty areas about assessment tools, curriculum materials and methods, and management techniques.

Reading specialists and specialists in speech and language may tutor children who may or may not be designated as having special needs. Expertise

in assessment and curriculum within their disciplines is expected, together with experience in consultation. The potential overlaps with the specialist in learning disabilities is resolved in different ways in different systems.

Another common area of overlap is in assessment. Frequently, assessment of intelligence is reserved for the school psychologist, and tests of social and emotional adjustment are conducted by the guidance or adjustment counselor or social worker. However, the selection of tests that are used and the decision about who administers them vary by system and are often determined by historical precedent, the particular skills of the individuals hired, state certification guidelines, and/or the priorities of prominent training institutions in the area. In short, a job title does not guarantee precise similarity in functions across schools and systems, so it is crucial to learn what specialists do in one's own system and how they do it.

Other educational specialists may be assigned on a part-time basis to a school. For example, specialists in working with children with visual and hearing impairments may offer many resources to regular classroom teachers. Physical and occupational therapists can offer guidance about the needs of children with physical handicaps and resources available to meet them. Physical therapists concentrate on the functions of muscle groups, and aid teachers and parents in helping children to move correctly. They use positioning, massage, exercises, hydrotherapy and other techniques to help children develop their motor skills. Occupational therapists help children to identify and use appropriate adaptive devices (such as braces or walkers) to learn life skills (such as feeding and dressing), and to increase visual motor coordination.

Information from art, music, and physical education teachers that could enrich the regular classroom is seldom fully utilized. School nurses may be helpful in answering questions about children's medical difficulties and in

forging direct liaisons with medical personnel as appropriate. Finally, parents are often overlooked as a valuable source of information about their children's strengths, needs, interests and responsiveness to management strategies.

Public Law 94-142 strengthens the likelihood that regular classroom teachers will be invited to work with some of these resource personnel, since this legislation does require a team approach to program planning for children with special needs. Specifically, membership on the team must include the child's teacher (regular and/or special), parent(s) or guardian, and a representative of the public school or agency (other than the child's teacher) who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of special education. In addition, if the child is being evaluated for the first time, the person conducting the student's evaluation or a person knowledgeable in interpretation of the data needs to be included. The child may also be included, if appropriate. Others may participate at the discretion of the parents or agency.

These "discretionary" members may represent a very wide range of disciplines. The law specifically allows:

> "developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist the handicapped child to benefit from special education, including speech pathology and audiology, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services, and medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes. The term also includes school health services, social work services in schools, and parent counseling and training" (Pennsylvania Dept. of Education, 1980).

Appendix 1 contains job descriptions for some of the resource personnel described above, as well as a sampling of job titles and functions for personnel in non-educational settings who may be called upon to assist

the team.

Problems in Achieving Useful Collaborative Relationships

There are both interpersonal and system factors that limit teachers' collaboration with resource personnel.

Asking for Help Reveals a Deficit

One interpersonal factor that limits collaboration is the difficulty that many of us have in asking another for help. In a time of teacher layoffs, teachers are often reluctant to admit any problems or difficulties. They fear that such an admission signals a deficit in their skills which may eventually be reflected in administrators' evaluations. The fact that this attitude is common (and sometimes shared by administrators) does not limit its destructiveness in discouraging the ongoing staff development that is vital to the health of any school.

Status with Peers

Related to this issue is concern about lessening one's status with peers by asking for help. There is often confusion among teachers and specialists about what consultation is and how to do it. A common misconception is that in consultation the consultee asks for help and the consultant tells the consultee what to do. A more useful model for consultation (presented in the module on consultation in this series) is that consultation is a problem-solving process based on mutual give and take.

Although concern about status is a personal issue, it is perpetuated by the preservice training that is provided to teachers and specialists. Training institutions rarely provide courses in consultation and experience in working with others from different backgrounds. Moreover, in preparing for one's field, it is unlikely that one would gain exposure

to the special vocabulary and theoretical approaches that dominate the training of other educational specialities. Therefore, new skills need to be learned on site. Both personal courage and strong support for collaboration by peers and administrators are required for colleagues from different disciplines to work at overcoming territoriality, differences in vocabulary and concerns about status.

The Dominant Assessment Model Underutilizes the Knowledge of Teachers and Support Personnel

Another system-level problem that has been widely recognized in recent years concerns how we assess children who present difficulties in our classrooms. Assessments provide important opportunities for initiating interactions between classroom teachers and support personnel. The dominant approach to assessment, borrowed from the medical model, uses standardized tests to identify deficits in the child's functioning. This approach provides important information and should not be eliminated, but it does tend to neglect the child's strengths, environmental contexts which permit optimal or less than optimal functioning, and developmental changes which affect the child's behavior over time. By concentrating on the child's deficits and assuming that these deficits are relatively fixed, the contributions that educators make to intensifying or lessening these deficits are ignored.

Teachers and support personnel need to examine their own expectations and the environments they design to solve the assessment puzzle. As Wallace and Larsen (1979) explain:

> "(The) professional who conducts an ecological assessment attempts to view the child and his or her environment (e.g., the classroom, home, etc.) in its totality rather than as discrete and separately functioning entities. The reason for this is that an individual does not act independently of outside forces in any given situation, but is continually

> responding to a series of situational factors that may or may not be apparent to the casual observer. Such variables as peer pressure, teacher and parent demands, school climate, and the child's own self-concept all have the potential to either "positively" or "negatively" influence a child's academic and social behavior. It is logical that analysis of an underachieving or misbehaving child in relation to the environment(s) directly affecting this behavior may yield for the teacher considerable data regarding the nature of the observed problem, as well as suggest remedial strategies that may lead to its eventual amelioration (p. 99).

By pooling information, teachers and support personnel can obtain more useful and accurate assessments of children. Such exchange can be helpful in determining such things as what physical arrangements in a classroom lead to a child's concentration or disorganization, what kind of teacher instruction and involvement works best, the child's preferred learning style, or what ingredients seem to contribute to a child's disruptiveness. (See Swap and Prieto [1982] for more detailed examples). Without such exchange, it is not possible to ascertain (for example) what aspects of the child's performance are unique to one's own classroom, which problems occur in several settings, and which may be easily modified. In addition, a full discussion by regular and special teachers of their goals and expectations for a child can highlight agreements and discrepancies that might not otherwise surface. Differences in expectations may lead to less than optimal performance in children and may hinder progress in achieving educational goals.

Information from persons who play a significant role in the child's life outside of school is also essential to avoid a fragmented or distorted view of the child's capabilities and to uncover resources which might be vital in an educational plan. For example, information from parents or guardians is always important. In addition, parents may help to identify other key individuals providing services or support to the child within the community, such as a beloved grandmother, a respected coach, or those

providing medical or psychological services.

At a minimum, then, an evaluation process should consider:

1) the child's areas of strength and difficulty (to convey a picture of the "whole" child in a range of settings);
2) the specific characteristics of the setting(s) when difficulties occur (time of day, where, with whom, teacher role, task or transition);
3) the specific characteristics of setting(s) in which the child is functioning optimally;
4) information about who is identifying the problem and why (Do parents, teachers, specialists agree? If not, are there important differences in values, expectations, temperament or style?);
5) information about resources within the neighborhood or community which might be used in developing an effective educational plan.

Several tools are now available which help us to evaluate the child-in-setting. Eco-mapping is an aid to specifying the significant individuals in the child's home, school and community. Apter has designed a checklist (Teacher's Self-Study of Classrooms, 1982) which helps to pinpoint a teacher's style and values. Hobbs (1980) provides specific instructions for completing an "Ecological Assessment and Enablement Plan." Samples may be found in Appendix 2.

In summary, our current deficit-oriented assessment model underutilizes support personnel in three ways. First, if we fail to share information about the several environments to which a child responds, we lose valuable data that may help us understand behaviors and pinpoint appropriate intervention strategies. Second, an open discussion of goals, values, expectations

and styles among the professionals serving the child may benefit the target child, non-target children and the staff. Third, we tend to unwisely ignore the potential contribution of information and support from non-professional sources such as family and community members.

Insufficient Opportunities and Support for Collaboration

Developing collaborative relationships with others requires time, opportunity, and some type of reward for one's efforts. Schools rarely incorporate these requirements into their structure. Finding a time to meet with a specialist often means extending the work day. Teachers who attend the team meetings required by P.L. 94-142 are not generally released from their classroom responsibilities by the hiring of a substitute teacher. Consequently, teachers worry about what is happening back in their classrooms while they are gone. The paper work demanded by a team evaluation meeting is rarely acknowledged by release time, summer payment, administrative praise or other explicit forms of support. These structural barriers to communication discourage discussion that might lead to the joint assessment and resolution of problems.

There is a growing body of information now available which supports the hypothesis that collaboration between regular teachers and specialists is not optimal during the team evaluation process required by P.L. 94-142. In the discussion which follows, data will be cited which suggest that regular teachers may not consistently participate in these meetings. If they do, their participation may be minimal. Insufficient time is allotted to reach the complex decisions that need to be made. Goals for the child in the regular classroom may not even be included as an official part of the plan. Parents' contributions also tend to be minimized, resulting in additional failed opportunities for meaningful collaboration.

The intent of P.L. 94-142 is of course to place children in the least

restrictive environment that is appropriate to their educational needs and to encourage the formulation and implementation of educational plans by interdisciplinary teams of teachers, parents, and the specialists who work with the children. Participation of the regular classroom teacher in the team meetings is not required by the law, but is an option. Thus it appears that the first challenge that needs to be met by the regular classroom teacher is getting invited to the team meetings. Although regular classroom teachers have significant responsibility for educating mainstreamed children, they are often not present at the team planning meetings (TPM's). Decisions made at TPM's without teacher involvement are seldom communicated to teachers in writing, and the IEP's are rarely utilized in the classroom.

Specifically, Pugach (1982), using a sample of 33 teachers from a mid-western school district, found that "of the teachers, 52% had attended the most recent meeting at which an IEP was initially developed or annually reviewed; one teacher could not remember whether she had attended an IEP meeting" (p. 372). Yoshida, Fenton, Maxwell and Kaufman (1978b) found that the primary method of communication to teachers not present at the TPM was informal, oral communication. The authors expressed concerns about the clarity and consistency of these communications.

Pugach (1982) reported that of her 33 subjects, "67% reported that no goals or objectives were written in the IEP for the time mildly handicapped students spent in their classrooms" (p. 372). There were many comments about the lack of coordination between the goals of the regular and special education programs. The bottom line, though, was that most teachers never consulted the IEP. Only 12% even had a copy on file in their classrooms. Although it is certainly inappropriate to generalize from these few available

studies to all public schools, these results are sobering.

If a teacher does participate in a team meeting, she faces a second challenge: contributing to and influencing the decisions that are made. The prestige or authority associated with certain professional roles may have a stronger bearing on the decisions made than the actual quality or feasibility of their recommendations. Gilliam and Coleman (1981) studied which team members were most influential in making team planning meeting TPM decisions. They discovered that parents, regular education teachers, social workers and principals were ranked much higher in importance to the TPM by participants than they were in their actual contribution and influence. Conversely, supervisors and special education directors tended to be very influential (though their importance to the TPM was ranked low). Psychologists, special education teachers and special education directors were very influential during meetings. Yoshida, Fenton, Maxwell and Kaufman (1978a) in a questionnaire study of 1344 participants in 230 TPM's in Connecticut had comparable findings. Regular education teachers ranked lowest both in participation and satisfaction while school psychologists ranked highest in both. Low participation and satisfaction are related to lack of commitment to implementation according to Yoshida et al. (1978a). Rucker & Vautour (1981) review five studies which also identify a bias against regular educators during TPM's. Ysseldyke, Algozzine and Allen (1982) in a study of teachers' actual participation in 24 meetings concluded that they often did not participate, or did so in a superficial manner. For example, teachers were asked for test information or for recommendations only 9 times during the 24 meetings.

Knowing how to analyze a team's functioning and being familiar with group decision-making and conflict-resolution techniques are critical for

effective team functioning (Bray, Coleman & Gotts, 1981). Lyons (1979) observed many Child Study Teams as part of a state investigatory team. In an informal analysis, he reported that regular teachers often did not understand the reasons for the decisions made and often objected to decisions, but they rarely communicated their concerns during the meetings. Lyons recommended several techniques developed by Irving Janis to avoid "groupthink," one symptom of which is the uncritical acceptance by a group of the recommendations of the leaders.

Another problem highlighted by researchers is not allotting sufficient time to the TPM's to permit information sharing, questions and decision-making about appropriate goals and objectives. A recent study of 24 placement team meetings (Ysseldyke, Algozzine & Allen, 1982) revealed that meetings ranged in length from 5 to 57 minutes, with a mean length of only 31 minutes.

Collaboration of regular teachers and parents is not automatic or easy. As mentioned earlier, parents of handicapped children have important information to contribute to assessment and program decisions. Moreover, parents' participation in these decisions is a right guaranteed by P.L. 94-142. Apparently, however, required involvement does not guarantee effective collaboration.

The structure and culture of schools create some barriers to effective communication. For example, parents and school system personnel have different responsibilities and goals in relation to the child. As Lightfoot (1978) suggests in her assessment of sociological barriers between home and school, parents' attentions focus on the uniqueness of their child and a desire for optimal services. School personnel, on the other hand, must strive for relative equality of treatment across children, "adequate" services,

and financial restraint. Parents who have become informed about their rights and are experienced in insisting on specialized services represent a crisis to school budgets during this era of dwindling financial resources.

Consequently, schools are not typically taking initiatives to involve parents in the team planning process, beyond the mandated requirements. Several studies have indicated that parents are not active during the TPM in making decisions about the child's program (Yoshida, Fenton, Kaufman, & Maxwell, 1978; Gilliam, 1979, Goldstein, Strickland, Turnbull, & Curry, 1980). Hoff, Fenton, Yoshida & Kaufman (1978) further found that parents had a clear and accurate understanding of the decisions that had been made about their child's eligibility for services, placement, program goals, and review date less than 50% of the time, even when they had been present throughout the TPM.

Craig (1981) asserts that an unanticipated effect of P.L. 94-142 "is that fewer students may actually be receiving related services now than before its passage" (p. 11). Schools are reluctant to inform parents that their child may need physical therapy or counseling, for example, because the schools are now responsible for paying for any support services they recommend as necessary for the child's education.

School personnel also face difficulties with those parents who refuse to participate in the TPM or whose lives make it very difficult for school staff to communicate with them. Teachers, in my experience, reserve a special reservoir of venom for those parents who "don't care" and "don't show" even after repeated overtures have been made. They resent the non-productive use of their time and find it difficult to understand parents whose first priority is not their child. In short, achieving a real partnership with parents (and solid support by the parents for the efforts of the school) is a task whose complexity we have just begun to confront.

How Collaboration Can Be Enhanced

What can be done to address these problems in achieving collaborative relationships? Some interesting programs to train educators in multidisciplinary teams during preservice training have been piloted. For example, Helge (1981) developed a model for students interning in public schools which gave them experience as members of an interdisciplinary team. The focus of the team's effort was to create recreational programs for children. Bluhm, Egan, & Perry (1981) describe a seminar which provides didactic instruction and field experiences related to teaming. The seminar is followed by an internship. During the internship, the students chair simulated team meetings and they participate in actual multidisciplinary team meetings. Golin and Ducanis (1981) offer a seminar to students from different disciplines where the students function as teams in and out of class. The primary function of the teams is to conduct a research project which involves the study of an actual team operating in a school or human service agency. Each of these programs requires access to students from different disciplines, support and commitment of resources from college administrators, and cooperative relationships with local schools and agencies.

Achieving more effective interdisciplinary collaboration among school personnel is also a complex task. The first requirement is that staff sharing be seen as important and useful to the staff and to the children they educate. A recent study of a large urban school system emphasizes the importance of collaboration. Little (1981) discovered that the most successful schools were those characterized by a high level of sharing among the staff. Both the frequency of interchange and the number of different types of interchanges were important. Schools where most of the

staff took part in frequent, focused and practical interchanges about teaching, and where experimentation in teaching was the norm had less absenteeism, higher levels of student achievement, higher frequencies of program completion and more community support.

For collaboration to be successful, its value must be emphasized by concrete administrative and system-level support. In Little's (1981) study, the principal played a crucial role in creating a climate which fostered staff interchanges. Collaboration increased when principals rewarded it in concrete and visible ways, when they announced expectations for collaboration, modeled these expectations in their own behavior, and made it safe and acceptable for teachers to share new ideas and practices.

In a comprehensive review of successful change efforts in schools, Judy Schiffer (1980) makes the same point: "the amount and kind of change that is possible for any individual is circumscribed by the amount and kind of organizational change that occurs" (p. 127). Organizational changes include: "time, space, and materials need to be reorganized; rewards for new behaviors must replace rewards for old; administrators must support experimentation with new goals; resources must be provided; and rules and procedures must be realigned" (pp. 126-7).

A third ingredient in improving staff collaboration is developing a systematic plan for inservice education or long-term staff development. The content of the training will vary by school and system, but some procedural constants should emerge. To synthesize the results of many studies on improving schools:

1) Staff should be involved in planning activities.
2) Participation should be voluntary.
3) Activities should be planned by and offered to regular educators, specialists, administrators, and parents as appropriate.

4) Different teaching styles and methods should be presented, and a wide range of consultants/instructors should be utilized from inside and outside the system.

5) Activities should sometimes involve group problem-solving, and opportunities for discussion, experimentation, feedback and evaluation should be built into the development plan.

6) Finally, it seems useful for planning to extend over several months, but to allow flexibility in scheduled activities to accommodate changing circumstances.

Although an effective staff development program can have significant impact on collaborative opportunities and group problem-solving, it may also be useful to plan specific training for child study teams. Some specific inservice training packages on developing effective interdisciplinary teams are now available. For example, Vautour & Rucker (1977) have developed a 35-50 hour multimedia program which can be adapted to particular districts. It offers information and activities about referral, IEP planning, procedural considerations, parent involvement, and administrative concerns. Particular schools may request inservice on interpersonal skills, or workshops on the roles and functions of their colleagues. An important first step is to recognize that effective collaboration is not automatic, and to use the creativity of the faculty and administration to identify appropriate training and practice opportunities for themselves.

Utilization of Human Resources

What happens in public schools is deeply influenced by shifts in national political currents. The values and attitudes important to each administration are reflected in legislation and budget allocations. These affect priorities and the availability of resources in public schools across the country.

Recent years have seen significant cutbacks in funds for educational and

social services. Many local communities and some states have also enacted legislation which reduces the amount of money available to schools. Rauth (1981) insists that it is the classroom teacher who bears the burden of being unable to adequately serve the handicapped children who have been returned to the classroom:

> In reality what has happened is that the system has broken down; it is financially unable to meet its newly imposed responsibilities. (Inability to comply in the broad sense must be distinguished from instances of unwillingness of a school system to appropriate adequate funds.) Because the commitment of public education to try to fulfill all societal requests is so strong, and because the judical and legislative penalties for noncompliance can be so costly, school personnel usually try to appear to meet the letter of the law. An accepted part of this game is that the teacher becomes the scapegoat. If something is wrong, it must be the fault of a lazy, insensitive teacher. This is not part of the ideal or the reality; it is simply an essential element of a political compromise common within public education today. Too often, legislators, advocacy groups, and others wash their hands of social commitments by devising conceptual solutions to problems without regard to whether adequate resources are available to carry out their purposes or to whether their theories meet reality (p. 34).

Rauth asserts that the resources that are essential are those which support inservice programs for teachers, special education personnel, and materials for individualizing instruction. Without this commitment of resources, she believes "we will be forced to pretend that rhetorical good intentions are reality" (p. 36).

This is one important point of view. Sarason and Doris (1979) have another, which provides more hope in these barren times.

> The events of the past few years not only exposed the fact that resources are always limited but also emphasized the need to reconceptualize what we mean by resources. More specifically, as long as schools define resources as those for which they can pay, the discrepancy between what schools can and should do will always be large. This is not only a problem for schools but for almost every type of human service that by tradition and public sanction is dominated by professionalism. The disease of professionalism is in the tendency to define human problems in ways that require highly educated professionals for their solution, thus rendering the problem unsolvable (p. 406).

Sarason and Doris prompt us to ask three basic questions in trying to work with support personnel to meet the demands of P.L. 94-142: 1) are we using the resources that we have effectively? 2) are there other resources that could be utilized? and 3) can we develop more creative programs to address the burgeoning level of need?

Utilization of existing resources

Have we responded primarily by creating more professionals in trying to meet the demamds of P.L. 94-142? There is some evidence that we have. We have created at least two new professions: the resource teacher and the generic teacher. We have taken children out of self-contained classes and put them into regular classes, but their special needs continue to be met primarily by specialists. As mentioned earlier, movement of several children with special needs into and out of the regular classroom can result in fragmentation of instruction for both teacher and child.

Fragmentation of instruction is a significant problem. In one school system, for example, 23 of 29 classroom teachers interviewed confirmed that they experienced a great deal or moderate amounts of fragmentation (Klugman, Carter, & Israel, 1979). These teachers recorded from 10 to 90 visits to specialists among children in their classes per week, with the mean level of visits at 54.8 for the high fragmentation group and 35.3 for the moderate group. Seven of 36 teachers in this system further reported that they had 2/3 or more of the children assigned to them all together for fewer than 13 hours a week. The experience of fragmentation was related to frustration and stress.

Unfortunately, even with these significant efforts to respond to new directives, children are not being fully served. There are not

enough specialists to address the needs of all the children. Some children whose needs are mild are not referred; some children fall through the cracks because their "deficit" does not match the resources available; and professionals to deal with the severely handicapped, the multiply handicapped, the adolescent and the young child are in short supply. Specialists with increasingly large case loads cannot spend enough time with a given child to make a difference, and prevention of future problems continues to be a low priority.

Two changes in our approach to service delivery seem to be essential to use our existing professional resources more effectively. The first is to support specialists in providing more indirect services to teachers (consultation; workshops on adapting materials or understanding and managing behavior; demonstrations of the materials and methods which specialists use.)

This is not a new idea. A number of articles have been written since P.L. 94-142 was enacted which stress the importance of indirect service roles for resource teachers (e.g. Apter, 1982); school psychologists (e.g. Porter and Holzberg, 1978; Martin and Meyers, 1980); school counselors (e.g. Dash, 1975; Cristiani and Sommers, 1978). Moreover, teachers are generally eager for ideas that will help them in the classroom. Evans (1981), for example, in a study of the perceptions of classroom teachers, principals, and resource room teachers of the actual and desired roles of the resource teachers, found that classroom teachers are most supportive of increased resource room teacher participation in communication and consultation activities. Klugman, Carter, and Israel (1979) found that teachers considered specialists to be helpful when they felt they understood what the

specialist was doing and when s/he communicated with them regularly and directly in informal conversations. Willingness to learn from each other is the first step. As Klugman, Carter, and Israel (1979) conclude:

> What seems called for is a method, or a set of methods, to provide the necessary extra services in forms that are more integrated with and responsive to the child's total cognitive and social experience, and which recognize the part teachers and their perspectives have in the ecology of the school, rather than simply having services tacked on as extra elements in the school day (Klugman, Israel and Carter, 1979, p. 11).

The second major thrust that is needed to improve existing services is more effective coordination of those services that are provided. Classroom teachers must be involved in the development of goals and programs for children in their care if there is to be any overall integration of the child's program. Coordination means common goals for the child, common or compatible curriculum, sharing materials in different settings, visits of specialists to the classroom (and vice versa), selection of assignments that do not overburden the child or focus only on deficits, and collaboration with parents and significant community resources. Coordination also means that someone needs to be responsible for seeing that the plan is implemented, that disputes about goals or functions or priorities get resolved, and that the success of the plan is evaluated. Hobbs' (1980) designation of a "case manager" is a useful model (See appendix 2 for the original article). Apter summarizes the crucial role of coordination:

> ...Coordination is the key...Building strong ecosystems should be the ultimate goal of intervention...Linkages between various aspects of each child's world are seen as critical elements (not "fringe extras", that are only to be considered if time allows) in the development of successful programs (p. 79).

Identifying additional resources

Sarason and Doris (1979) suggest that the guiding question in

identifying necessary human resources should be "who can quickly learn to be helpful" rather than "who has the qualifications." This conceptual shift opens up a treasure chest of possibilities that may be added to the contributions of existing professional personnel. Within the classroom, for example, other children can be effective helpers. Cross-age tutoring (Jenkins, in this series) can be useful for solidifying the skills of the older helper while providing individual instruction to the younger child. Other teachers may be the best resource for ideas about individualizing instruction or managing behaviors in large groups. Building-based inservice can be used to encourage teachers to share "ideas that work." A peer-sharing model which emphasized identifying individual goals, identifying individual strengths and using release time to visit other teachers' classrooms to work on one's goals has been effective. If additional time is built in for follow-up consultation with one's colleagues during try-out of new ideas, these models are even stronger. The janitor, the audiovisual specialist, the shop and music teachers may possess skills that could be integrated into the curriculum. These resource personnel might help out with class projects or be willing to have a child join them for a short time as a reward for the child's academic accomplishments.

There are many resources in the community as well. Some schools now have volunteer programs, which draw on parents, college students, and older citizens. Volunteers perform mamy roles such as providing clerical support to the teacher and help to individual children (See Schindler-Rainman and Lippitt, 1975).

A teacher of gifted children found a useful method for identifying resources. She sent a one-page questionnaire to registered voters in

her small community asking recipients to identify any special skills or talents they might be willing to share. She used this file to provide expert information to children doing individual projects on such topics as rockets, making blueprints and learning Russian. Members of the community also shared their knowledge during group projects such as learning about international customs and foods.

Student teachers can provide many services to children and teachers as they learn their craft. Business or service industries may be willing to share their products or include "apprentices" as a gesture of community involvement. For example, a representative of a local paper in Rhode Island was willing to come to any class to talk about any item in the news. A local company which made cameras was willing to donate several cameras and film for a high school photography project. Members of a local historical society talked with students, shared scrap books and documents about the town's history.

Another interesting approach to obtaining additional resources, particularly within agencies, is exchanging services. Semmel and Morrissey (1981) describe five elements important for inter-agency collaboration. These are cross-agency leadership, joint proactive planning, flexible budgeting, incentives for change, and investment in impact evaluation.

Parents can provide many important resources in addition to volunteering in the classroom or library. A parent might coordinate a school enrichment program, develop a resource directory of summer programs with other parents and staff, arrange for publishers to bring their materials to a curriculum fair, offer consultation to other parents at the request of principals, or contribute their

ideas to an advisory board (See Swap, 1981).

The identification and utilization of non-paid resources is a significant but rewarding task. The appropriate provision of resources can make teachers' jobs possible, can reduce teacher isolation and stress, and forge a closer bond of school with community. If care is taken to make sure that the experience is worthwhile for the resource providers, then everyone gains. It is crucial that teachers leave teacher education programs with a strong sense of the many and varied resources available in the typical school and community to aid them in educating the wide range of students they will find in their classrooms.

Developing Creative and Responsive Programs

Sometimes the answer to developing more effective programs for children with special needs cannot be found in increasing teachers' skills, specialists' skills, or their skills in working together. Sometimes the educational programs we have developed inadvertently create or sustain deviance in children. Morse (1976) explains:

> ....We focus on the competency of the teacher and the accomplishment of successful prescriptions when the real issue is elsewhere...It is dismaying to see teachers described as incompetent when anyone who has been in the business knows that the program is so incomplete that recovery would be a miracle...Teacher competency must be replaced by program competency if we are to be honest. (p. 87)

Let me give an example. In a middle school where I was consulting, teachers expressed anger and extreme frustration at the aggressive and disruptive behaviors exhibited by many youth mainstreamed into regular classes. These behaviors made it impossible for them to teach. Though they felt positive about the concept of mainstreaming and had worked successfully integrating children with other handicaps, they wanted these disturbing children <u>out</u> of their classes. A

group of teachers and the principal suggested inservice training on behavior management skills. The teachers tentatively participated, but finally rebelled, insisting that they knew the techniques and used them, but they were not sufficient. A task force of teachers and specialists was identified. They saw the problems they faced as program problems: the only curriculum offered was a college-preparatory program which was not appropriate for some of the children; many of the children had significant crises at home, and parent-staff communication was inadequate; the single specialist in emotional problems was providing direct service to 26 children and did not have time for consultation; the course scheduling was not sufficiently flexible to take advantage of child/teacher/subject combinations that worked; there was no format for providing intensive support to a child in crisis. They argued that these emotionally disturbed children were most bothersome, but that other kids could benefit if these problems were corrected as well. The administration has listened to the task force report and is beginning to implement some program changes.

While beginning teachers must be taught to be realistic about the organizational problems they will face, they must also be sensitive to them. Persistent and pragmatic young teachers can have considerable effect on school organizations, particularly if they are effective in interpersonal communication. But they must know too that changes in programs are the most difficult and slow to implement. Moroney (1981), explains:

> ... professional practice is affected by the way in which our agencies are structured and service delivery systems organized. Once implemented, programs often become ends in themselves, rather than instruments to achieve some

> objective. They generate their own dynamics and can reduce efforts to initiate change through more flexible experimentation. The emphasis tends to be on organizational survival....Needs are translated invariably into what a particular agency has to offer...For any number of reasons, whether organizational requirements or professional satisfaction, services that were introduced initially as possible mechanisms to assist people with need quickly become the way to do things. Services that were seen as potentially of benefit become solutions whose benefit is rarely ever again questioned. Innovation is replaced with caution and flexibility with formal structures" (pp. 196-197).

The first step in dealing with this trap is recognizing it. As described earlier, school-based, interdisciplinary problem-solving with administrative support is the best way of arriving at innovative and practical solutions (McLaughlin and Marsh, 1980; Schmuck, 1979; Tye and Novotney, 1975). All educators have an opportunity to influence and shape such a process. In many systems, this process has already begun.

CLASS ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1: LEARNING ABOUT RESOURCE PERSONNEL

PURPOSE: The purpose of these activities is to extend students' knowledge about resource personnel.

DIRECTIONS:

1) Invite a range of specialists to class to describe their roles and to bring sample materials or tools for assessment and remediation.

2) Have students observe a typical day in the life of a regular educator, a specialist and a principal. Ask students to develop an interview schedule which will inform them about these educators' roles, goals, and attitudes toward handicapped children. Report their discoveries to the class.

3) Have students attend a team assessment in a school. Ask the students to evaluate (e.g.) what happened, why, the kinds of information provided by different participants, the kinds of decisions that were made, the nature of the interactions, and the kind of leadership provided.

4) Heighten students' familiarity with specialists from other disciplines. Have them observe a special class or program for the visually impaired and blind; visit a developmental evaluation clinic, and/or observe a play therapy or group therapy session.

ACTIVITY 2: LEARNING ABOUT THE PARENTS' PERSPECTIVE

PURPOSE: The goal of this activity is to extend students' understanding of parents' roles in schools.

DIRECTIONS:

1) Invite a panel of parents to describe their children, their experiences with professionals concerning their children, and their recommendations for professionals seeking to work with parents. Include fathers, if possible.

2) Invite students to interview parents of handicapped children. Some possible questions:

   a. What were the most important issues you faced this week as a parent of a child with special needs. Are these issues the same ones you have dealt with in the past? Have the issues been consistent over time?

   b. What aspect of your role gives you most satisfaction? What do you find the most difficult part of being a parent?

   c. How does your role fit into the rest of your life? Have you had to do things differently because of it?

   d. What advice would you give to students as they prepare to work with parents? Would you give the same advice for interacting with professionals?

   e. Do you think PL 94-142 has been successful? How has it affected your child? Have you participated in team evaluation meetings? What has this experience been like? What behaviors of others were helpful/not helpful?

   f. How would you like to be involved with your child's school? Have your ideas about this changed?

3) Ask students to spend a day with a family which includes a handicapped child, including morning and bedtime routines.

4) Ask students to observe a situation in which parents are working with school personnel. For example, they might observe a parent advisory committee, a planning committee meeting for the PTA, or a parent volunteer working in a classroom. Ask students to brainstorm ways in which parents might be involved in school. Ask them to identify factors on both sides which limit parent involvement and the development of trusting relationships. Then brainstorm solutions to both these problems.

ACTIVITY 3: LEARNING ABOUT COMMUNITY RESOURCES

PURPOSE: The purpose of these activities is to extend students' knowledge about community resources.

DIRECTIONS:

1) Have students brainstorm ways of identifying the skills and interests of adults in the community who might make a contribution to the classroom.

2) Visit a successful volunteer program in the community and interview its director.

3) Locate a senior citizen center. Explore the interests of participants and staff in contributing to the school, tutoring children or arranging after-school meetings.

4) Have students arrange a visit to a neighborhood health clinic, mental health center or charitable organization. Ask students to provide a brief report of the services provided, clients served, referral procedures, and involvement with local school systems.

ACTIVITY 4: WORKING WITH RESOURCE PERSONNEL TO ASSESS A CHILD

PURPOSE: To use an ecological assessment approach to evaluate the case provided and to simulate a child study meeting in which agreement is sought about what steps to take in helping the child.

1) There are two supplementary materials for this activity: a case study and an assessment form which utilizes an ecological approach. Read these first.

2) By using the ecological assessment form, students should become familiar with the ecological approach described in the text. You may wish to extend this activity by asking students to practice assessing other cases (from literature or their own experience) using this format.

3) The case of John could be used to illustrate alternative approaches to assessment. Assume that the kindergarten teacher has asked for consultation on the case from a learning disabilities specialist and/or a guidance counselor. Also assume that these specialists were trained in the medical model, and each focuses exclusively on the deficiencies John manifests within their specialty areas. (That is, the learning disability specialist thinks that John probably has specific learning disabilities and recommends an evaluation at the local neurology clinic. The guidance counselor suspects that John is emotionally disturbed and recommends a psychological evaluation). Let us say that the teacher has concerns about the differences between home and school that might affect John and wants to explore the possibilities of simplifying the school environment and working with the mother.

   Ask students to role play this encounter. The goal would be to use the resources and information that could be offered by each of these educators in developing an intervention plan.

A Case Study

John has spent four months in your kindergarten class. As John's teacher, you have a number of concerns about him. First, he seems to be having difficulty orienting to the class. As Christmas approaches, he is still unable to find his cubby; he calls you and your student teacher only "teacher", he bumps into furniture

falls down, and has trouble finding objects (such as the fish tank) in the classroom. None of the other 16 children is having these problems.

Secondly, his skills in pre-academic areas are uneven. Although he seems of at least average intelligence, he has trouble choosing and finishing tasks because of distractibility. His vocabulary is good, but he stumbles over words when he is asked to tell a story or explain something in "show and tell". His fine motor coordination is awkward: he cannot make letters, a square, or a diamond, and his drawings of people are very primitive. However, he loves to do pegboards and puzzles and is good at them.

He has no friends in the classroom, but spends his time wandering from activity to activity, occasionally asking a teacher for help with a specific problem, such as buttoning his coat. His inability to choose and complete an activity on his own concerns you. He seldom smiles or cries and seems unconnected to the passions and concerns of the other children. Occasionally he just stands staring into space. He sometimes looks worried, especially when in a situation where you ask him to perform specific tasks for others, such as drawing a person or making letters of the alphabet. In school he works best in a small office, apart from the classroom, where you or the student teacher provides him with short, interesting activities one at a time. Then John shows good concentration, better fine and gross motor control and more enjoyment.

Your classroom is a busy, exciting place. It consists of a long room divided into activity areas, such as the doll corner, the climbing structure, the water and sand table areas, the daily activity areas, and the block area. One long wall of the classroom is formed by a window which looks out onto an elaborate playground with swings, climbing structures, and a large sandbox. The children have a great deal of choice in their daily activities. There is a short group time, an indoor free play period, seat work, outdoor recess and a story time at the end of the three hour morning. You provide an array of curriculum activities and short and long-term projects for the children.

John's parents are very concerned about him but don't know how to help him. John is the oldest of three children one year apart. The only "toys" at home are magazines, a Sears Roebuck catalogue, and the television. The mother is warm but overwhelmed by the responsibilities of her children. She has trouble being consistent, answering the children's questions, and keeping order. The family lives in a white, lower middle class neighborhood. John's father is a foreman in a watch factory. Both parents' chief concern is that John is a "bad" child, particularly when he teases his sister, jumps on the furniture, or disobeys a parental command.

An Ecological Approach

to Assessing a Disturbing Interaction

1. Identify the disturbing behavior(s). Exactly what is happening? What happens before the disturbance? After? Who is involved? When does it occur? What times of day are free from this disturbance? What differentiates these occasions?

2. Who is disturbed by the interaction? (Who is not?) What expectations or norms are being violated by the behavior? Are the expectations reasonable?

3. Does the same disturbing interaction occur in other settings (other classes? at home? on the playground?) What hypotheses do you have about why similar disturbances may (or may not) be occurring in these settings?

4. What might be causing this disturbing interaction: For example, is there a discrepancy between the child's abilities and the expectations of individuals in the setting?

   Do you, peers, parents, or other persons significant to the child have different expectations for his/her behavior?

   Is the physical environment contributing to the disturbance?

   What is the behavior accomplishing for the child? Can these goals be accomplished in less disturbing ways?

5. Consider all your options for intervening. Ecological interventions are eclectic. But their basic goal is to make the <u>system</u> work.
   a. Should you change your expectation?
   b. Can you make it possible for the child to meet your expectations: (Change curriculum? schedule? reinforcements? staff-student ratio? Does the child need glasses or a change in medication?)
   c. Should you alter the physical environment?
   d. Should you involve others to help you analyze the problem, implement a solution, or support your efforts? (the child, the child's peers, other teachers, school support personnel, the principal, parents, community resources)

6. Do you need to intervene on more than one level? (e.g. make changes in your setting and confer with parents) What is your first priority? Who needs to agree? Who needs to do what? What will your first steps be?

ACTIVITY 5: DEVELOPING LISTENING SKILLS

A. IDENTIFYING LISTENING SKILLS

PURPOSE: The goal of this activity is to help students identify the skills involved in active listening.

DIRECTIONS: Ask students to think about an occasion when they felt someone was really listening to them. What did the person do that made them feel listened to? List their ideas on the board.
(Usually students do a wonderful job at this. For reference, you may wish to consult Brammer, L. The helping relationship: process and skills. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1973, pp. 81-86 or Sprinthall's (1982) module on Counseling Skills in this series.)

B. USING LISTENING SKILLS

PURPOSE: The goal of this activity is to help students practice using listening skills in a simplified format.

DIRECTIONS: Hand students the sheet "Incident at a Team Planning Meeting." Ask students to take a few moments to write down replies. Ask students to share and critique their responses according to the list they generated about effective listening.
(Hints: Students usually write longer responses than necessary. A short response that paraphrases the content of Mrs. Jones' statement and/or reflects the intensity of her feeling is most appropriate. Any incident may be substituted for the one provided. Students may appreciate the opportunity to practice with a second incident.)

Incident at a Team Planning Meeting

You are a classroom teacher attending a planning team meeting. Towards the end of the meeting, Mrs. Jones (John's mother) turns to you with tears welling in her eyes. She says to you: "I can't understand anything that's going on here. I never knew that John had so many problems! Why didn't you tell me any of this before"?

What is your automatic response?

What would a "listening" response be?

ACTIVITY 6: DEVELOPING CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS

PURPOSE: The goal of this activity is to provide students with strategies for resolving conflicts and to give them an opportunity to practice them.

DIRECTIONS:

1) Share the hand-out "Hints for Resolving a Conflict" with students. Use anecdotes and examples from your own experience (or from Fisher) to make the suggestions come alive.

2) Provide opportunities for students to practice these skills, without requiring them to apply all of them at once. For example, students could practice responses which might help them to understand their opponent's position (#1). In another exercise, students could practice identifying the interests and values behind their opponent's position (#4). Asking students to develop written responses to confronting statements, to role play for 5 minutes, to watch and critique a role play situation performed by others are helpful.

   Sample situation (which can be adapted to any of the above formats):

   Classroom Teacher: John is in your fourth grade class. He has learning disabilities which make it difficult for him to read at grade level. He spends 25% of his day out of the classroom with the resource teacher and the reading specialist. He is having trouble with all the transitions into and out of class. He is not popular with the other children. At the team meeting you plan to recommend that his time with the resource teacher be reduced.

   Resource Teacher: It has taken quite a while to develop a solid relationship with John. You are just starting to note some progress in his ability to sequence sentences and answer comprehension questions. He works well with the other 2 boys in his group. At the team meeting, you plan to request that he spend more time with you.

   Begin the activity at the moment during the meeting when this conflict about John's placement emerges.

3) Ask students to recollect a conflict which they were not able to resolve. Ask them to work with 2 other students to think through how they would handle the conflict now. Ask them to role play the situation after they have thought out and discussed specific strategies.

4) Show a videotape which presents an IEP conference (e.g., "Simulated IEP Conference," available from Linda Warren, Assistant Professor, Wheelock College, 45 Pilgrim Road, Boston, MA 02215). Assess the problems and successes in communication and decision-making.

Hints for Resolving a Conflict

1) Understand your opponent's position. Listen actively. Summarize what you hear and ask for clarification.

2) Separate the person from the problem/conflict.

3) Understand your emotions and theirs. Acknowledge emotions as legitimate, but don't respond in kind to an opponent's outburst.

4) Identify the interests and values behind your opponent's position. Why is he/she advocating that position? Why is he/she opposed to your position? Identify common interests and values. Dovetail differing interests.

5) Make your own interests come alive.

6) Invent options for mutual gain. Brainstorm several possible solutions. "Your problem is my problem."

7) Try to identify objective criteria that will help you to reach agreement. (Principles, precedent, fair procedures.)

8) If you cannot reach a full agreement, opt for a temporary solution and set a time to evaluate the outcomes.

Adapted from: Fisher, R. & Ury, W., Getting to Yes. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981.

ACTIVITY 7: LEARNING TO BE A CONSULTEE

PURPOSE: To review and practice Reynolds' guidelines for being the recipient of consultation.

DIRECTIONS:

1) Review Reynolds' guidelines with the students (you may also wish to consult the module on consultation skills in this series written by Myers, 1982).

Consultation Guidelines for Classroom Teachers

1) Remember that you "own" the problem, you are in charge of the education of the pupil or the class procedures that are under consideration.

2) Be sure that there is early agreement with the consultant on the nature of the "problem" and on how decisions will be made. Draw up a contract orally or in writing early in the relationship on goals, methods, and responsibilities.

3) Be sure that it is clear that you (the teacher) are the client - that all communication flows to you. The consultant is there to help you structure your work, not somebody else's. This relationship does not preclude some direct assessment of children and observations in the classroom by the consultant if they are agreed upon as part of the contract.

4) Avoid status problems. Consultants and clients are co-equals.

5) Avoid entering personal subjective materials (letting attention shift to your personal needs and problems); instead, keep the content of the relationship centered on the child and the instructional situation.

6) Seek alternative suggestions from the consultant rather than a single or set plan.

7) Try to use each period of consultation as a learning experience to increase effective communication and listening, building trust between professionals, and maximizing instructional effectiveness.

8) Evaluate each consultation experience objectively and share your conclusions with the consultant.

Source: Reynolds, M. Observations on the course in special education planning held at the Federal University in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil). National Support Systems Project 1977.

2) Bring in an experienced consultant to describe his/her work with several consultees. What does the consultee do that makes it easy to be a good consultant? What makes it hard?

3) See if students can arrange to observe a consultation between a specialist and a classroom teacher. If the student is able to interview them individually after the consultation to ask for their reactions, it would extend the student's experience.

4) The next step would be to have students practice the role of consultee. For this, they need to be very familar with a case and have a partner who is skilled in consultation. The students may draw on their experiences with children for case material or a published case study of a handicapped child. You may wish to play the role of consultant, instruct your students in this role, or use graduate students preparing for a professional role which includes consultation.

ACTIVITY 8: DEVELOPING PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

PURPOSE: The purpose of this exercise is to make students familiar with the stages involved in problem-solving and to give them practice in using them. Many problems emerge in working with resource personnel, and this step-by-step process provides a framework for solving them.

DIRECTIONS:

1) Discuss the stages in problem solving. Add embellishments from Havelock or your own experience.

Stages in Problem Solving

1) Build relationships

2) Define the problem and diagnose the reasons for it

3) Generate alternative solutions

4) Select a solution

5) Implement the solution and evaluate the results

Adapted from Havelock, R. The change agent's guide to innovation in education. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Educational Technology Publications, 1973.

2) It takes time to use this process for solving a problem. You may ask each student to undertake a "change" project as a semester-long assignment in a professional setting. It is best that the project not focus on changing oneself or one's relatives! The "change" project provides useful content for students interested in practicing consultation skills.

3) Alternatively, invite students to use a problem-solving process to define and resolve an issue which is concerning them in the college. One interesting wrinkle is to ask them to individually consider the issues from three angles: are there factors within themselves that contribute to the problem? in the department or college? in the community or culture? Are there resources or strengths within each of these areas that might be drawn upon to solve the problem? After individual reflection, ask them to share their ideas and select priorities for action based on feasibility and probability of success (and be prepared for some changes!).

4) Apply the problem-solving process to a school-based problem in working with resource personnel (e.g. finding time to meet together, being unfamiliar with the materials and goals of specialists, ineffective structure for parent-teacher conferences, difficulty in communicating with one another when disagreements arise). Perhaps students could observe this process at work in schools nearby.

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Appendix 1

a. Sample job descriptions for specialists recently recruited in a public school setting

b. List of services provided by a sample of other specialists available in most communities

a. Sample job descriptions for specialists

JOB DESCRIPTION

Resource Room Teacher

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Resource Room teacher works with children in areas outlined in the educational plan for each child. The Resource Room teacher will also have responsibility for monitoring each child's work and will be a resource person for members of the regular classroom staff. The Resource Room teachers will be a participant in Core Evaluations and in the work of the Child Study Teams.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provides instruction for each child assigned to the Resource Room.
- Monitors each child's progress.
- Selects suitable materials for the Resource Room.
- Writes and submits quarterly reports on each child.
- Chairs the team writing of educational plans for each child in the Resource Room.
- Schedules each child in the Resource Room.
- Carries out diagnostic testing as requested by the Administrator of Special Education.

CERTIFICATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

- Must have certification in Moderate Special Needs. (Master's degree preferred.)
  Teaching experience is required, preferably in both regular and special needs classrooms.

RESPONSIBLE TO the building principal for day-to-day work. Evaluation of the Resource Room teacher will be the responsibility of the Principal as primary evaluator and the Administrator of Special Education as secondary evaluator.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Generic Consulting Teacher

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Generic Consulting teacher is a school-based special education consultant to classroom teachers in assisting them to define strategies for special needs students in the regular classroom setting.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

- Monitors progress of all 502.1 children.
- Consults with referring teachers on children referred through the various referral mediums.
- Does diagnostic assessments as assigned by the Administrator of Special Education.
- Conducts inservice workshops for teachers in Special Education.
- Participates in Child Study Teams and Core Evaluations.
- Interprets tests and suggests practical uses of test results.
- Participates in the selection of appropriate educational materials.
- Writes Educational plans for children as assigned.
- Writes quarterly reports on children as assigned.

CERTIFICATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

Must have certification as a Generic Special Teacher of School age Children with Mild Special Needs. (Master's degree preferred.) Teaching experience is required, preferably in both regular and special needs classrooms.

RESPONSIBLE TO the building principal for day-to-day work. Evaluation of the Resource Room teacher will be the responsibility of the Principal as primary evaluator and the Administrator of Special Education as secondary evaluator.

April 5, 1978

JOB SPECIFICATION

School Adjustment Counselor

General Description

Responsibilities of the School Adjustment Counselor shall be limited to those assigned through the Director of Guidance and Student Personnel and may involve casework services of individuals and families. The emphasis will be on preventive and therapeutic social and mental health services as an integral part of the educational process. These services will be coordinated cooperatively with the members of the Child Study Team and appropriate community agencies.

Specific Responsibilities

1. Prepare social histories and diagnostic evaluations.
2. Provide casework services of individuals and families.
3. Provide reaching out casework and intervention in crisis situation.
4. Referral of cases to appropriate community resources as a result of Child Study Team recommendation and approval of the Director.
5. Work cooperatively with other school personnel relative to the social, emotional and educational needs of students.
6. Work as a Child Study Team member to facilitate communication between home and school.
7. Assume such other related duties and responsibilities as may be assigned by the Superintendent.
8. In all cases, these functions, activities and their application are subject to approval and change by the Superintendent of Schools.

Staff Relationship

The School Adjustment Counselor is directly responsible to the Director of Guidance and Student Personnel and in all respects is responsible to the building principal for the cases to which he/she is assigned.

The role of the School Adjustment Counselor to staff is best effected by a cooperative relationship in all matters involving the social adjustment services.

Preferences for Educational and Professional Experiences

- A Master's Degree in one or more of the following fields of concentration: Social Work, Psychology or Guidance.

- A Master's Degree in Social Work receives full approval. Master's Degree in other disciplines should conform to the following:
  A minimum of 15 semester hours in the following areas:
  Counseling } 9
  Psychology }
  Social Work 6

- Must meet state certification requirements.

- A minimum of two years of successful experience with ages 3 through 21 as a social worker or adjustment counselor, preferably related to a public school setting.

- A minimum of two years of successful experience as a social worker or adjustment counselor preferably with a public school system.

- Supervised clinical experience either in an approved graduate program or a mental health agency.

- The preferred qualifications listed above may be waived when, in the judgement of the Superintendent, a candidate has other outstanding qualifications which might offset a specifically listed preference.

Perquisites

Salary: 1974-75 - Appropriate place on teachers' salary schedule with credit for academic preparation and related professional experience as judged by the Superintendent.

Work Year: The regular school year as approved by the School Committee.

Sick Leave, Funeral Leave, Excused Leave, Religious Leave and Longevity shall be applied in the same manner as teachers.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position

Reading Teacher

Elementary Skill Center Teacher
Secondary Reading Teacher, Grades 6-12

Qualifications

Education

Master's degree in reading is preferred.
Must have Massachusetts certification as "Special Teacher-Reading" or "Consulting Teacher of Reading".
Candidates without experience must have class standing in the top 25% of their undergraduate and/or graduate degree class.

Experience

It is preferred that the candidate have at least one year's experience as a regular classroom teacher and at least one year's experience as a reading teacher.

Salary

Belmont Teacher's Salary Schedule

Position Responsibilities

- To the appropriate School Principal for the day to day operation of a Skill Center or Reading Center, and as a resource person for the school's developmental reading and language arts program.

- To the Coordinator of Reading for the development of a philosophical base and the maintenance of a well-coordinated system-wide reading program.

- Cooperatively with classroom teachers and other specialists to assist in planning and providing appropriate reading programs for all students.

Duties of the Position

- Cooperates in screening, diagnosing and selecting students for special reading programs or courses, and participates in the Student Review Team.

- Works directly with students to provide remedial or corrective instruction, reinforcement, or enrichment of skills in reading, language arts or other basic skill areas, as needed. This instruction may take place in the Reading Center or Skill Center, or in the classroom.

- Works with classroom and content area teachers to articulate and coordinate special reading programs with classroom programs.

- Is a resource person in the total school reading program:

  a. Assists teachers in organizing classroom reading programs - organization of reading groups; selection of materials; suggestions for techniques, skill management, and organization of time.

  b. Makes recommendations for the school reading program based on interpretation of reading test scores.

  c. Makes recommendations regarding needs for diagnostic and instructional reading materials; assists in the school inventory of reading materials.

  d. Makes recommendations regarding reading needs in content areas, and works with content teachers to help students develop the reading skills needed for effective reading of special subject materials.

  e. Is available to provide or recommend workshops for staff and parents.

  f. May disseminate to staff and community information, educational articles, newsletters about school programs.

- Works with reading staff and reading coordinator to maintain and improve the system-wide reading program.

- May at the request of the principal, provide instruction in other basic skill areas such as writing or mathematics (elementary level only), as needed by individual students.

11/80

(PROPOSED) JOB DESCRIPTION

HIGH SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The school counselor is responsible to the High School Principal and his designated representative(s) and will be evaluated and supervised by the Head Counselor, High School Principal and Director of Guidance and Student Personnel on a cooperative basis. In the fulfillment of his role, the counselor is primarily responsible for aiding students in the resolution of personal educational problems, and the planning of achievable vocational goals through a realistic self-appraisal of his own interests, needs and potential.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Information Service

- Collects and disseminates to students and parents information concerning careers, opportunities for future education and training, and school curriculum offerings.
- Assists students and parents in understanding procedures for making applications and planning for financing the student's educational and vocational goals beyond high school.
- Consults with the school administration and faculty relative to the curriculum offerings which will meet the abilities, interest, and needs of students.
- Develops an understanding of the total school curriculum and communicates this information to students, parents and the faculty.
- Shares appropriate individual student data with staff members, with due regard to confidentiality.

B. Referral Procedure

- Accepts referrals from teachers, parents and/or school administrators.
- Initiates referrals, with the approval of parents, to specialists in the district and/or community agencies.
- Functions in a coordinative and/or consultative role when providing assistance to the students.

C. Counseling Service

- Assists the student by means of individual and/or small group counseling sessions to understand and accept himself as an individual, thereby making it possible for the student to express and develop an awareness of his own feelings, values, and needs.
- Seeks to develop in the student a greater ability to cope with and solve problems and to increase competence in making decisions and plans for which he and his parents are responsible.
- Furnishes educational, vocational, and personal information to the student, as required, regarding his plans, choices, or problems.

D. Testing, Measurement, and Individual Appraisal Service

- Accumulates meaningful information concerning students through such means as conferences with students, parents and teachers, standardized test scores, academic records, anecdotal records, personal data forms, autobiographies, inventories, and rating scales.

- Interprets student information to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and others professionally concerned with the student.

- Assists with the identification of students with special abilities or needs.

- Administers tests when deemed appropriate by the Director of Guidance and Student Personnel.

- Releases educational information concerning students only to professional educators and/or prospective employers. Ethical standards are to be observed when releasing confidential information.

E. Placement Service

- He shall assist students and parents to make a long-range plan of study for the high school years and periodically review such factors as changes in the curriculum, student appraisal data, school achievement, the student's maturity, and new goals.

- He shall plan with administrators and teachers: to assist appropriate classroom placement for students; to establish procedures for course selection by students and grouping of students.

- He shall furnish student data to the receiving school when a student transfers, obtain student data for new students, and give individual student data to educational institutions and prospective employers.

- He shall assist students and parents with the procedures for completing applications and financial plans for attending educational institutions and for making application for employment.

- He shall confer with admissions personnel and personnel directors and visit educational institutions as well as businesses and industries for the purpose of assisting students in gaining admission to institutions of higher learning or post high school employment.

F. Follow-Through, Research, and Evaluation Services

- Conducts and/or cooperates with others in conducting studies of graduates and/or school dropouts.

- Assists in the analysis of all aptitude and achievement tests and shall prepare summary reports to be presented to teachers and administrators.

- Conducts studies and prepares reports as directed in regard to scholastic aptitude, achievement and the educational program.

- Periodically evaluates the use of pupil personnel records and makes recommendations for revision whenever necessary.

- Keeps informed of educational and occupational trends at the national and local levels.

- Assists with evaluative studies of the counseling and guidance program.

- Maintains and utilizes pupil cumulative folders, collects and records essential facts and information about pupils in these folders, information which is appropriate to an understanding of the pupil's abilities, aptitudes, achievement, interests, and other personal characteristics.

Summary

The counselor shall perform such other relevant duties as may be assigned by the Principal and Director of Guidance and Student Personnel. In all cases, responsibilities, functions, and any changes are subject to approval of the Superintendent.

DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS

- Must meet Massachusetts certification requirements.

- Master's degree in guidance or related field and/or substantial graduate work related to work responsibilities.

- Some teaching experience is preferred.

- Experience in counseling in a public school setting; intern experience is the minimum acceptable.

- Demonstrated ability to relate with students of all ability levels plus an understanding of the guidance function within the public schools.

- Demonstrated ability to maintain positive relationships with professional staff, parents and the community and to articulately explain guidance functions.

- Proven ability to organize and function effectively while meeting diverse responsibilities.

WORK YEAR AND PERQUISITES: Same as teacher

SALARY: Appropriate place on teachers' salary schedule based on experience and preparation.

PROPOSED JOB SPECIFICATIONS

CAREER EDUCATION SPECIALIST

General Description

The career education specialist works as a coordinator and resource person reporting to the Director of Guidance and Student Personnel Services in the area of career education. The career education specialist is responsible for a comprehensive approach to the development of a career awareness program for kindergarten through grade twelve.

Specific Responsibilities

The Career Education Specialist:

Is responsible for developing a sequential K through grade twelve set of objectives to expose all students to a wide spectrum of career development information, knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Is responsible for planning, developing and maintaining a Career Information Center in the schools.

Works cooperatively with the building principals in planning and teaching elective courses in career awareness education.

Serves as a resource person to the building principals and staffs in providing learning activities related to career education.

Consults with the principals and their staffs relative to career education materials that may augment existing curriculum offerings.

Works cooperatively with the counselors in providing career education services.

Collects and disseminates to students, parents and staff members information concerning career education and career opportunities.

Assists guidance counselors in matters pertaining to job requirements, trade schools and vocational opportunities.

Informs area business and industry of vocational education programs in the schools, and seeks information regarding their job requirements.

Will teach one course in Career Awareness at the Chenery Middle School.

Remains up-to-date on changing job-entry skill requirements and changing technologies in business and industry.

Performs other duties, as suggested by the Director of Guidance and Student Personnel Services and approved by the Superintendent of Schools.

Staff Relationships

In all matters concerning the plans, development and implementation of a comprehensive program in career education, the career counselor should maintain a cooperative relationship with the building principal and the Director of Guidance and Student Personnel Services.

Preferences for Education and Professional Experience

A master's degree from an accredited college or university, to include specialization in Career Education or Guidance/Counseling.

Certification as required by state authorities.

Evidence of two years of appropriate school-related experiences (may be waived in unusual circumstances).

The preferred qualification listed above may be waived when, in the judgment of the Superintendent, a candidate has other outstanding qualifications which might offset a specifically listed preference.

Salary: 1977-78 Teachers Schedule

	B.A.	BA + 15	M.A.	MA + 15	MA + 30	MA + 45	Doctorate
(Minimum)	$10,465	$10,672	$11,222	$11,548	$11,875	$12,237	$12,599
(Maximum)	17,341	17,640	19,322	19,746	20,268	20,824	21,381

Work Year

The work year shall be the same as a teacher's work year.

b. List of Services Provided by a Sample of Other Specialists

(Source: Adapted from list developed at Children's Hospital, Patient Activities Department, Boston, Massachusetts, 1977.)

There are many specialists in the community and in many agencies upon whom you may need to call. They can provide more assistance in those areas in which you are having a particular problem. Listed below are some of these people and the kinds of services they can provide.

AUDIOLOGIST

A specialist who screens and evaluates people for their hearing ability. She/he may also prescribe hearing aids or make suggestions for training.

DENTIST

A specialist who screens, diagnoses and treats teeth and gums.

NEUROLOGIST

A medical doctor who works with the screening, diagnosis and treatment of disorders of the brain and nervous system.

NUTRITIONIST

A specialist who plans, screens and treats issues surrounding diet.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

A specialist who develops programs, particularly in fine motor and self-help skills, to provide independence in people with handicaps.

OPHTHALMOLOGIST

A medical doctor specializing in diagnosis and treatment of the eyes.

OPTICIAN

An individual who makes corrective lenses.

OPTOMETRIST

A specialist who screens for vision, prescribes and fits glasses and provides eye exercises and treatments.

ORTHOPEDIST

A medical doctor who treats diseases of muscles, joints and bones and prescribes corrective equipment.

OTOLOGIST (ENT)

A medical doctor who treats eye, ear, nose and throat disorders.

PEDIATRICIAN

A medical doctor who specializes in treating children.

PHYSICAL THERAPIST

A specialist who works with motor functions and treats muscle, joint, nerve and bone diseases or injuries.

PSYCHIATRIST

A medical doctor who diagnoses and treats personality and emotional disorders.

PSYCHOLOGIST

A specialist who screens, diagnoses and treats individuals with social, emotional, behavioral and developmental problems.

REHABILITATION COUNSELOR

A specialist who aids individuals in gaining job-related skills and finding employment.

SOCIAL WORKERS

Specialists who manage cases, aid families in finding resources and help them in coping with family difficulties.

SPEECH PATHOLOGIST

A specialist who screens, diagnoses and treats individuals with communication disorders.

APPENDIX 2

1. Eco-mapping (Apter)

2. A Checklist for Teachers' Self-Study of Classrooms (Apter)

3. Hobbs, N. "An ecologically oriented, service-based system for the classification of handicapped children." (See especially the section: Ecological Assessment and Enablement Plan," [pp. 276-283].)

From Apter, S. Troubled children/Troubled systems. New York: Pegamon, 1982.

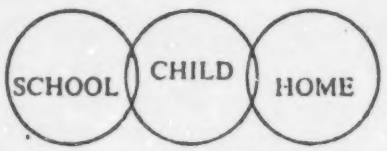
thwart good behavior (the child is required to remain seated for extended periods of time, is not allowed to interact with his/her peers, does not act as if he/she enjoys doing specific tasks, appears to dislike the teacher, only misbehaves in environments that are loosely structured).

Ecological assessment relates directly to situational variables and to the child's interactions with these variables in different environments. The resource teacher must analyze the child, especially if he/she is evidencing any type of behavior problem, in different environments in the school and make adjustments in the environments in which the child is having difficulty, adjustments with the child, or adjustments in both [p. 208].

ECOMAPPING

Figure 6.1 above demonstrates the use of an increasingly popular aspect of ecological assessment, ecological mapping or ecomapping, as it is sometimes called. Ecomapping is based on the premise that each child is part of a mini-social-system *and* that it is possible to represent that ecosystem graphically. The resulting schematic representation of a youngster's ecosystem is termed an ecomap. The process by which the ecomap is produced is known as ecomapping.

The simplest kind of ecomap might look like this:



Note that the child is at the center of his own system and that home and school environments overlap with different parts of the child (and elicit different behaviors from the child).

Before the simple ecomap above can be extended to include more information, it is necessary, as MacKay (1978) says, "to do some detective work." By visiting and observing the child in a variety of settings and talking with the adults who interact with the youngster, a teacher or psychologist might be able to determine exactly where the disturbance in the system occurs.

Figure 6.2 represents the ecosystem of a seventh-grade boy (MacKay, 1978) whose problems seem to center on math class (observations indicate no problems in other settings). Further, it has been determined that the issue in math class is that the material is too difficult for the youngster and new

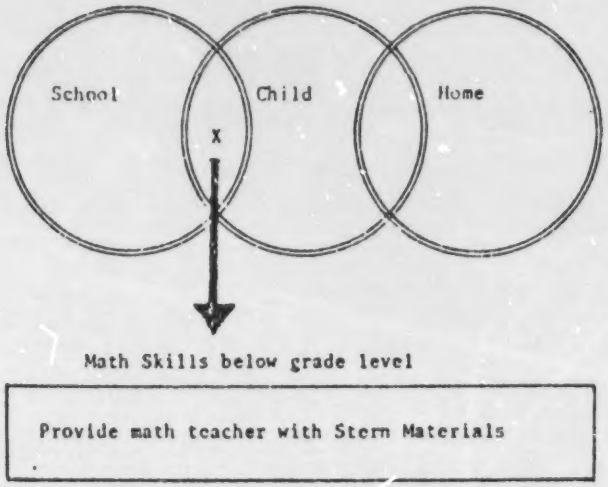


Fig. 6.2. Ecomap of the troubled math-class system of a seventh-grade boy (After MacKay, 1978).

or different materials must be provided in order for the math class system to become balanced again.

The X in the overlapping child-school area represents the disturbed math class system for our "troubled" child. The box at the bottom of Figure 6.2 outlines the remediation plan.

Should time and the specifics of your job description allow, you might next decide to investigate the home sphere. Whenever this is possible, it is a good idea, as it certainly can provide more important information for the ecomap (and for your planning efforts) and can also often be a first step in developing better home-school relationships.

Figure 6.3 represents a series of more elaborate ecomaps of MacKay's seventh-grade boy. The uppermost map (Figure 6.3a) represents the two major findings of the analysis of the seventh-grader's home system: the boy has essentially no outside activities and the home atmosphere is marked by the parents continual fighting. At this point in the ecomapping process, some new system disturbances have been identified, but remediation plans have not yet been developed (hence the two empty boxes in Figure 6.3a).

MacKay suggests looking for obvious solutions first. In this case, it is her belief that the obvious solution to finding outside activities for a seventh-grade boy is to check at his school. Should that prove unproductive (the bus schedule may prohibit his staying after school hours), it would make sense to check on neighborhood facilities near the youngster's home. If we

assume that our seventh-grader cannot stay at school and needs to find outside-the-home activities in his neighborhood, the remediation might be involvement in a nearby youth program and the ecomap might now look as it does in Figure 6.3b.

The final discordance in our seventh-grader's troubled system might require the services of another agency. In this case, it might be appropriate for one or both parents to receive assistance from the community family and

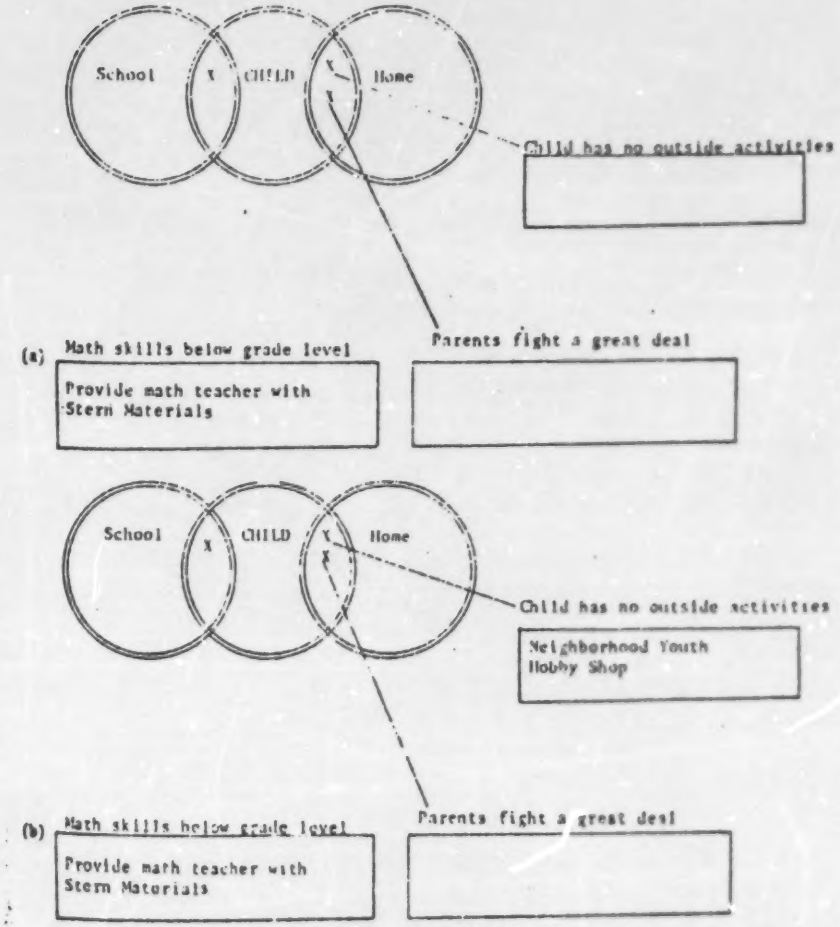


Fig. 6.3. Progression of eco-maps in planning for a seventh-grade boy (After MacKay, 1978).

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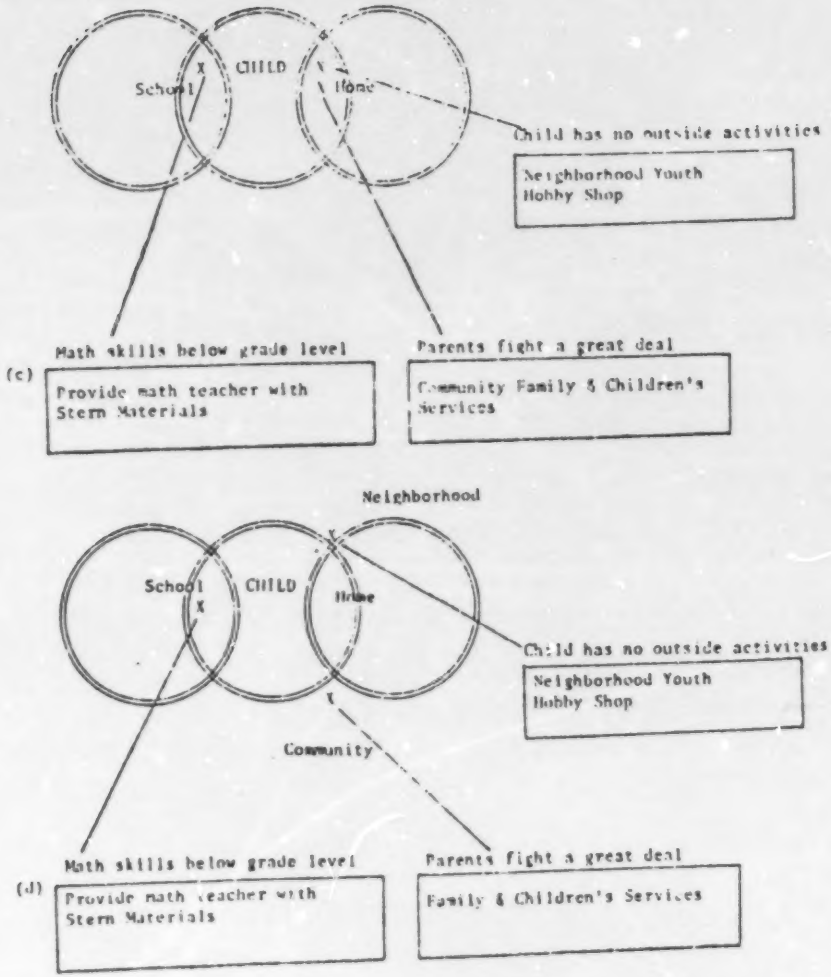

Fig. 6.3. (Cont.)

children's service, and now the ecomap would be depicted by Figure 6.3e. Incidentally, MacKay points out the need for ecological assessors to serve as facilitators in the service-delivery process. For example, it may be extremely helpful for the teacher, psychologist, social worker, or other professional involved in this example to accompany the parent(s) on the first trip to the family and children's service agency.

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MacKay also points out that the use of an ecomapping technique can not only help in the development of appropriate intervention plans but may also revitalize aspects of a youngster's system that can become very productive assets for the future:

> Although we have identified and provided a solution for every need that seems to be the most serious for this child and our ecological map looks complete, we have actually changed the ecological map of this child by the nature of our interventions. We have added two components to his ecology that were dormant as far as his life was concerned: neighborhood (through the Youth Hobby Shop) and Community (through the Family and Children's Service). We cannot know how involved these two components will become in the life of this child and his family but the chemistry of the interaction will have an effect on both and hopefully, the experiences in both components will give the child and the family more alternatives for success and joy in life [p. 11].

Figure 6.3d shows the completed ecomap, and indicates how neighborhood and community components of our seventh-grader's system have been brought to life and integrated into remediation plans for one youngster's troubled system.

The ecomap technique has been utilized in a variety of settings. Hartman (1978) for example, provides some description of ecological assessment for social workers:

> Social workers have recently attempted to use the ecological metaphor to provide a new way of thinking about and understanding what has always been the central focus of social work, "person-in-situation." Such a stance appears to be useful in assessment and in devising ways of being helpful.
>
> . . . Utilizing the ecological model for assessment in social work leads us to focus on the complex ecological system which includes the individual or family and the total environment and the transactional relationships between that individual or family and the environment.
>
> . . . An ecological assessment which focuses on the transactions between human beings and the complex of systems which compose their environments leads naturally to a model of social work practice which focuses interventions on these transactions and to particular reliance on such social work practitioner roles as mediator, enabler, social broker, and advocate. The goals of such ecologically oriented practice is the enhancement of the quality of life.
>
> . . . An ecological assessment requires the visualizing of a highly complex system with many variables acting simultaneously. . . . One picture however, is worth a thousand words and thus, through drawing a rather simple map of the person or family in the life space, many of the complexities and interrelationships can be captured [p. 18].

Hartman (1978) also suggests four ways to utilize the ecomap and the ecological mapping process:

1) *A "thinking tool" for the worker*—The worker may simply want to think about a family situation, organize data, discover areas where more information is needed, and begin to locate possible areas for intervention. Sketching out the map may enable the worker to "see" the situation in a new way and out of this enhanced understanding may come meaning by creative problem solving.
2) *An assessment tool to be used jointly by worker and client(s)*—Doing the Eco-map together moves both worker and client to a view of the total situation. The construction of the map gives the information gathering some pattern and structure. Following completion of the map, the worker and client(s) can examine it together and reach a joint assessment of the situation and a plan for change.
3) *A recording tool*—Some agencies have found the map to be a useful recording and communication tool. The presence of an Eco-map in a case record can give another staff member or a supervisor a quick sense of the situation and communicate considerable information.
4) *A measure of change*—Some agencies have experimented with drawing the Eco-map at intake and again at termination. A comparison of the two will demonstrate what change has taken place [p. 20].

An ecomap is one especially ecological assessment method. In addition, a variety of more traditional assessment tools can also be utilized within the context of an ecological orientation. For example, systematic observations can be made of youngsters in as many components as possible of a particular child's system.

More specifically, formal or informal observations might focus on the interactions between teachers (or other adults) and identified troubled children. Instruments for classroom observation, for example, are available and have been used for a variety of research and program planning efforts in the past. To be useful, of course, such instruments must be both valid and practical (appropriate to the situation at hand).

Checklists and rating scales are additional measures that may prove useful in ecological assessment practices. Checklists can be formal or informal and can be utilized best as a means by which youngsters' or environments' strengths and weaknesses can be assessed and described. Oftentimes, checklists can be devised by teachers for particular situations. Ecologically, however, teachers or others who devise such instruments must be careful to be comprehensive in scope, to look for positive as well as negative characteristics, and to develop tools that can be useful in a variety of settings.

Rating scales are somewhat more sophisticated than checklists; they can describe the *degree* to which particular characteristics exist in the situation which is being examined. Rating scales may also be devised for specific situations so long as scale developers pay careful attention to validity as well as practicality concerns.

Finally, sociometric techniques can also be a useful addition to the ecological assessment process. Sociograms enable assessors to understand the web of relationships within any particular behavior setting more clearly. They are particularly helpful in our efforts to understand the place of troubled children in classrooms.

CONCLUSIONS

It is essential that the assessment process which forms the initial and critical first step of any problem-solving or planning process have an ecological basis if we expect to develop programs with the potential to effect troubled systems. While we have discussed a number of specific strategies for ecological assessment, it is most important to recall that however it is done, assessment must be of the system, not simply of the child in isolation from the contexts that surround him or her.

While techniques for ecological assessment are still developing, we are beginning to understand some critical aspects of this process. For example, the importance of considering strengths is emphasized by Koppitz (1977), especially in relation to work with older children (though the point holds equally well for young children):

> When older children are seen for evaluation it is just as important to determine what they are good at than what their problems are. Even though every effort should be made to remediate specific learning difficulties most children learn best and are taught most successfully by building on their areas of strength [p. 137].

Wiederholt et al. (1978) have suggested that resource teachers follow the following guidelines adopted from Wright (1967). At this phase in the development of ecological assessment techniques, we believe it would be appropriate for other teachers, psychologists, social workers, and other workers to use the following as the basis for their own assessment activities:

1. The resource teacher should focus on both the child and the environment during data gathering.
2. The teacher should report on these two variables in as much detail as possible.

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From Apter, S. Troubled Children/Troubled systems. New York: Pegamon, 1982.

Table 7.6. A Checklist for Teachers' Self-Study of Classrooms.

Here is a list of activities, attitudes, and concepts that some people feel apply to teachers.

Please read each item and check in the appropriate space whether you think it is important for a teacher or not.

If you do feel that an item is important, then also mark in the appropriate space whether you see yourself as doing okay on that item or would like yourself to be better on it.

Please write in additional items which are not on the list, but which you feel are important.

Items	Important	Not Important	I'm doing okay	I'd like to do better	
1. Involve students in lesson.					1
2. Stimulate class participation.					2
3. Present information.					3
4. Repeat important points.					4
5. Use examples and illustrations.					5
6. Ask questions that stimulate discussion.					6
7. Use group techniques in class.					7
8. Provide immediate verbal feedback.					8
9. Solicit feedback from class.					9
10. Serve as resource for students.					10
11. Use verbal praise.					11
12. Use nonverbal rewards.					12
13. Use punishment.					13
14. Be accepting of ideas students express.					14
15. Try new approaches.					15
16. Assess worth of innovations.					16
17. Assign grades to students.					17
18. Set standards for class.					18
19. Set limits for class members.					19
20. Enforce limits.					20
21. Let others know when I do not understand something they have said.					21
22. Let others know when I like something they have said.					22

Table 7.6. (Cont.)

Items	Important	Not Important	I'm doing okay	I'd like to do better	
23. Let others know when I disagree with them.					23
24. Let others know when I think they have changed the subject or become irrelevant.					24
25. Let others know when I'm getting irritated.					25
26. Let others know when I feel hurt or embarrassed, or put down by something they have said or done.					26
27. Listening to understand rather than preparing my next remark.					27
28. Before agreeing or disagreeing, checking to make sure I do understand what others mean.					28
29. Checking out with others what I think they are feeling rather than assuming I know.					29
30. Talking in group discussions.					30
31. Being able to stand tension and conflict.					31
32. Accepting help from others.					32
33. Offering help to others.					33
34. Standing up for myself among peers.					34
35. Giving in to others.					35
36. Feeling positively about being a teacher.					36
37. Being optimistic about education in our system.					37
38. Understanding thoroughly materials I teach.					38
39. Knowing about resources available in my district.					39
40. Monitoring nonverbal cues of students and others.					40
41. Being assertive with administrators and parents.					41
42. Being a model for students to admire and emulate.					42

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Table 7.6. (Cont.)

Items	Important	Not Important	I'm doing okay	I'd like to do better	
43. Spend time alone with individual students.	_____	_____	_____	_____	43
44. Consoling children who express fears and problems.	_____	_____	_____	_____	44
45. Playing with students in and outside class.	_____	_____	_____	_____	45
46. Talk informally to students.	_____	_____	_____	_____	46
Additional Items					

ceptualize their roles. The Self-Conception of Own Role Performance and directions for its use may be seen in Table 7.7.

Fox et al. point out that this instrument might be used both to list a teacher's actual behaviors and/or a teacher's expected behaviors. If teachers complete the report twice, once for actual behaviors and once for behaviors they believe to be expected of them, the resulting contrasts might become the basis for productive consideration of potential role change.

One way in which teacher roles might change is for teachers to incorporate more of an advocacy orientation into their work. Barnes, Eyman, and Bragar (1977) note that advocacy involves efforts to change policies that have led to a particular problem, in addition to acting on behalf of someone who has the identified problems. They also note the critical relationship between the ecological model and the role of advocate:

> To be an advocate, one must see behavior as a product of the interaction between a person and their environment (the ecological model) rather than as located within a person (the medical model). So no child is a "behavior problem" in a vacuum; rather, he or she is disturbing to a particular person in a particular situation. The remedy then relates to the situation and the interaction between the child and the situation, not just to changing the child.
>
> To advocate for one person to change his/her situation may help that particular person, but often others are in the same or similar situations: what seems like a private or personal problem is often a "public" one. An advocate will try to change the policies that create the public problem, not just find a solution for one particular case [p. 166].

The move toward an advocacy role for teachers is one important way in which teacher behavior can be changed directly. Teachers might also define their roles more in terms of community education, or parent education, or prevention, each of which would broaden the notion of teaching and in-

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From Hobbs, N. An ecologically oriented service-based system for the classification of handicapped children. In. S. Salzinger, J. Antrobus, & J. Glick (Eds.), The ecosystem of the "sick" child. NY: Academic Press, 1980.

Chapter 14

An Ecologically Oriented, Service-based System for the Classification of Handicapped Children

NICHOLAS HOBBS

99

Editors' Introduction

What follows is the blueprint for an innovative classification scheme, widely applicable to the entire range of handicapping conditions in childhood. Despite the apparent scope of the proposal, it achieves a more precise focus, by virtue of being service-based, than any other classification or diagnostic scheme currently being utilized, whether it be the DSM III, which is being developed in the United States, or the WHO system being worked on by the rest of the member countries of the World Health Organization.

Nicholas Hobbs, who has had the opportunity to examine innumerable classification studies while he was chair of the U.S. Government sponsored task force on classification of handicapped children, has acquired more sophistication and more wariness about the impact of the process of classifying than most of the researchers and practitioners who have utilized already existing categorical systems or have developed their own for the purpose of defining and isolating those aspects of disturbance with which they are expressly concerned.

This sophistication has led him to comment in introducing his systems, "It is necessary for the development of a classification system to define clearly what *purposes* (editors' italics) are to be served by the system and to specify what it is supposed to do." It is quite a different thing to specify the purpose of a system than to specify the content of the system, not that precise definitions of content are not required for any system, whatever the use to which it is to be put, but that the neglect of the specification of the purposes of a system can lead to its inappropriate utilization.

With regard to intervention into the lives of handicapped children, labeling the children in terms of predetermined categories has very often resulted in denying

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them treatment that might have helped them or placing them in treatment situations that have compounded their problems.

Most of our diagnostic systems, particularly those that have attempted to classify behavior in the field of mental disorder, have been developed in the laboratory for the purpose of defining a research sample that is homogeneous with respect to the behavior the researcher is interested in. That is, of course, a legitimate and necessary component of research activity, necessary for conducting research involving questions of etiology, epidemiology, and limiting the extrapolation of findings to the proper population.

However, with respect to intervention (which Hobbs points out includes service delivery, the organization of public and private agencies, planning, funding, accounting, and evaluating program effects), classification by merely categorizing disturbed behavior is not sufficient. What is needed is an assessment of the disabilities and needs of the child along with the ecological resources available to the child in order to arrive at a match between the two. For intervention, neither component can stand by itself, and a simultaneous functional assessment is necessary. It is a blueprint for just such a system that Hobbs proposes.

The extension of such a system, tailored as it is to the individual variability that is found among handicapped children, is not beyond our capabilities. If we follow Hobbs one step further and build into the treatment programs a scheme for recording and centrally registering not only the children's problems, but the services that were provided and the cost of those services, we can begin to build up a data bank to use as a national resource for projecting estimates of need and cost.

Perhaps his view may be seen by some as grandiose, but in our opinion it would serve in the long run to organize in a more rational way the resources we have available for helping disabled children and provide us with a less costly and more effectively focused system of intervention than we currently have.

The Editors

Introduction

This chapter outlines a new procedure for the classification of handicapped children for the purpose of improving procedures for providing services to them and their families.[1] The plan is simple and straightforward. It proposes that handicapped children be classified not on the basis of the familiar categories of handicapping conditions but rather on the basis of the services they require in order to grow in health, in intellectual competence, in social adjustment, and in self-esteem—up to some reasonable criterion. The plan recognizes that the child's developmental success depends not only on his or her attitudes and abilities, but also on situational factors at home, at school, and in the community. We therefore refer to the plan as an ecologically oriented, service-based classification system.

[1]For convenience, we refer to "children" and intend thereby to include children and adolescents, for whom the system has been best worked out. With appropriate modifications and illustrations, it would be equally applicable to adults, although adults may not be as responsive to environmental changes as most children are.

Existing Classification Systems

Currently children who are handicapped are classified according to approximately a dozen familiar categories: mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired, orthopedically handicapped, and so on. New categories or new labels emerge from time to time; thus the categories of learning disability and developmental disability have recently come into use. Other categories may be superimposed on these: indigent, person in need of supervision, delinquent, and so on. The categories are derived from diverse sources, including medicine, psychology, education, law, corrections, and social services. The terms are useful when communication about a handicapped child has to be only roughly approximate, but they present formidable obstacles to the delivery of services to the child and the child's family. To mention some of the problems:

1. The traditional categories obscure individual differences. There are mentally retarded children who cope well; there are legally blind children who can read print. At the point when decisions about services must be made, the categories are all but useless.
2. Current classification systems are based on the assumption that the problems of the handicapped child lie exclusively within the child. They do not recognize that the ability of the handicapped child t function well may depend heavily on environmental circumstances and arrangements.
3. Ordinarily a child is assigned to only one category, for example, mentally retarded or orthopedically handicapped. But handicapped children may frequently have handicaps other than the one on the basis of which they are classified. Indeed, the more severe the handicap, the more likely are multiple handicaps. Thus incidence and prevalence data on handicapping conditions based on traditional classifications are often inaccurate.
4. Current classification schemes are based on a pathology model; they are deficit oriented and do not take cognizance of individual strengths or ecological assets.
5. The traditional categories encourage the labeling of children. While it is difficult to demonstrate that labels add a burden beyond that imposed by the handicapping condition itself, a classification system that minimizes the use of labels has much to commend it.
6. The traditional categories tend to be static; they do not draw attention to developmental and situational changes in the lives of handicapped children. They not only reduce expectancy of change, but function, in fact, to invite and confirm behavior required by the category. Thus, institutions for mentally retarded children tend to provide reduced learning oppor-

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tunities; institutions for the emotionally disturbed invite sick behavior; institutions for delinquents become schools for crime, etc.

7. The classification system "loses" children because they fit best between categories. It is not unusual for an emotionally disturbed, mentally retarded child to be denied services by a program for the emotionally disturbed because he or she is mentally retarded and by a program for the mentally retarded because he or she is emotionally disturbed.

8. The categorical system is a substantial impediment to the integration of services and the continuity of care. Responsibilities are divided among the several professions and myriad agencies following categorical boundaries. There is currently no way to integrate services or apportion professional responsibility rationally without first revising the concepts on which the current service delivery system is based.

9. Finally, it is extraordinarily difficult, if not impossible, for governments to develop an adequate system for planning and assessing accountability using the classical categories as organizing concepts. To know, for example, that a school has served 24 mentally retarded children is of little use. One needs to know, for both planning and accountability purposes, precisely what services were required, what services were actually delivered, at what cost, and to what effect.

The thesis advanced here is that our current system for classifying handicapped children constitutes a major barrier to the efficient and effective delivery of services to them and their families and thereby impedes efforts to help them develop their potential to some reasonable level of attainment. An essential first step in improving service delivery would be to reconceptualize the basis on which handicapped children are classified.

An Ecologically Oriented, Service-based Classification System

It is necessary for the development of a classification system to define clearly what purposes are to be served by the system and to specify what it is supposed to do. The current system for classifying handicapped children exemplifies well the failure to observe this fundamental principle. Existing classification schemes are supposed to provide a basis for service delivery, for etiological and epidemiological studies, for research in general, for the organization of public and private agencies, for planning, funding, and accounting, and for ease in communication among professional people. It is not surprising that, in attempting to do all these things, they do none of them well. Proposed below is a system designed primarily for the purpose of improving the delivery of services to handicapped children and their families. It is an ecologically oriented, service-based classification system.

The ecological nature of the system enables it to make use of the fact that the functioning effectiveness of a handicapped child (as is in fact true of all individuals, handicapped or not) is substantially affected by environmental influences, arrangements, and individual-environment transactions. Traditional classification systems make no provision for this important fact. The system proposed here includes both environmental determinants of effective functioning and environmental responses evoked by the behavior of the individual. Environmental determinants include a wide range of alternatives, such as the removal of access barriers and the provision of prosthetic devices, having a hot meal, or providing a teacher or a pediatrician who understands the coping problems of handicapped children. The unit of classification, therefore, is not the individual child but the child-in-setting. *The system is referred to as ecological to take into account the situational, developmental, and transactional character of the demands on a service delivery system* (See Fig. 14.1).

The system is service-based in order to maximize its utility in planning, delivering, and accounting for services to handicapped children. Individual children are classified, to be sure, but not on the basis of clinical

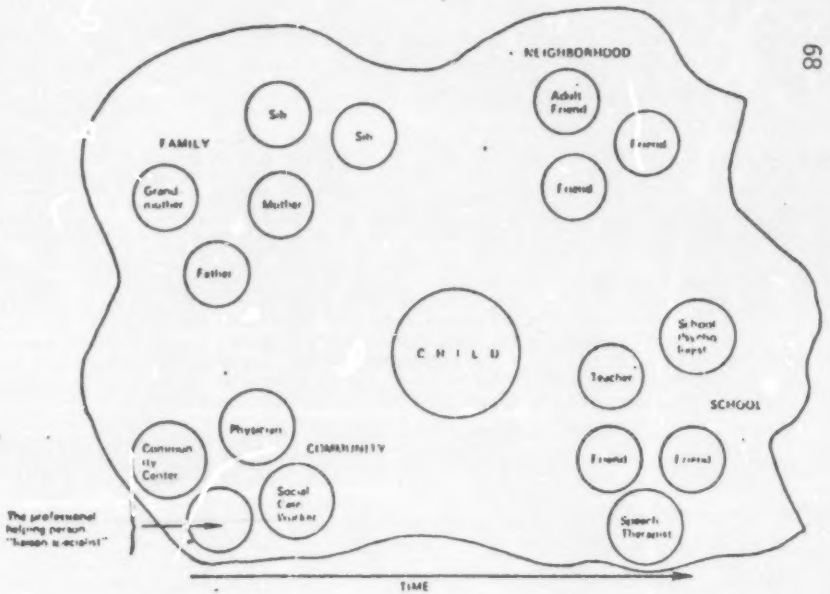

FIGURE 14.1 Schematic representation of the ecosystem of a handicapped child.

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nosologies; *they are classified on the basis of services required to achieve specified goals at a particular period in the life of the individual.* The classical categories of handicapping conditions are not employed, at least for the purposes of service delivery.

The system does, however, make appropriate use of traditional assessment procedures, although it is not limited to them. In order to work out a service plan for a particular child, it may be necessary to have the results of an intelligence test, an electroencephalogram, a test of educational achievement, an evaluation of motor functioning, and so on. However, the test results are utilized to arrive at a specific service-delivery plan, not for the purpose of making a diagnosis.

The ecologically oriented, service-based plan for the classification of handicapped children consists of two inseparable components: the ecological assessment and the enablement plan, both of which are expected to change with time. The plan thus avoids two severe limitations of current classification schemes: (*a*) the fixed diagnosis, with diagnosis being an end in itself, and (*b*) the separation of diagnosis and treatment, often resulting in the neglect of treatment.

While the traditional categories of handicapping conditions would not be used in the proposed system, it is not proposed that the classification of children and adolescents be abandoned. The proposal here advanced is, in fact, a classification scheme. It simply classifies many variables for the purpose of improving service delivery.

Ecological Assessment and Enablement Plan

To classify a child using the proposed system, the first step is to develop an "ecological assessment and enablement plan." This is a systematic audit of assets and deficits in the child's ecosystem with respect to requirements for service. The assessment involves: (*a*) identifying sources of discord in the ecosystem as well as sources of strength that can be used to improve the goodness of fit between the individual and important people and places in his life; and (*b*) specifying what services are required to enable the child to make reasonable progress toward achievable developmental goals. The ecosystem of which the child is the defining member should be brought sufficiently into balance to function without undue stress and to nurture the child's development in an adequate fashion. The goal is not to make the child perfect, but to make the ecosystem work reasonably well. The goal can be achieved by effecting changes in the child and also by effecting changes in the context in which he or she is expected to grow and learn,

particularly with respect to the expectations and conduct of significant people (mother, father, teachers, siblings, friends, etc.) in the child's life.

An ecologically oriented, service-based classification system requires some standardized procedure to determine the service requirements of the handicapped child, in a setting, at a particular period of time. This can be accomplished by means of an assessment conference. Ideally, the conference should be attended by all the people who have something of substance to contribute to the shaping of a service plan: the parents or guardian when appropriate, the child when old enough, a psychologist, a teacher, a special therapist perhaps, a physician, a social case worker, a supervisor at the prospective place for after-school care, and so on. Actually, the conference might seldom be as comprehensive as one might wish, but information from and about crucial people must be available at the planning session to make certain that an adequate plan is formulated for providing services to the child and that responsibility is assigned for carrying out the plan.[4] The record of the conference provides a blueprint for specifying what must be done in order to achieve agreed-on objectives. Below is an ecological assessment and enablement plan for an emotionally disturbed boy.

Ecological Assessment and Enablement Plan

Client: Robert Washington

Liaison: Margaret Smith
Cumberland House Elementary School

Date: May 15, 1978

Robert Washington, called "Bobby," is a 10-year-old black boy with a long history of involvement with social agencies and hospitals. Large for his age and powerfully built, Bobby is highly aggressive and combative, and it is largely his assaults on other people, children and adults alike, that keep him in constant trouble. He is described in several public school records as "unmanageable." At the time of referral, he had been out of school for a full year.

Bobby has spent 6 mo during the previous year at the state institution for the mentally retarded. Although his test scores are quite low, he showed evidence of intelligence that made the placement appear inappropriate. He was therefore transferred to the psychiatric ward of a medical school where he stayed for approximately 2 mo. During this period he was kept under heavy sedation to control his often-violent behavior. He had been discharged and was living at home with his mother and several siblings when referred to Cumberland House. He was continuing to take the medication under supervision of a nurse-practitioner with an office in the housing project where the Washington family lived.

[4] The prototype of this kind of conference is provided by the interdisciplinary planning team for the Individual Education Plan required in the United States by Public Law 94-142, Education for All Handicapped Children. The planning conference is not a hypothetical possibility; it is a functioning reality in many public schools.

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Bobby presented a puzzling psychometric picture. He had been evaluated a number of times in various centers. Intelligence tests yielded IQ scores in the 50s or lower, but the response pattern was erratic, with Bobby showing some signs of considerably higher intelligence. Bobby could not read or cipher. Indeed, he could not consistently identify digits or letters of the alphabet. Efforts to teach him to read had frequently been occasions for violent outbursts. Although mental retardation was a functionally accurate diagnosis, there was much evidence, especially in social negotiations, of a higher level of intelligence. For example, Bobby could readily learn unschoolish tasks, such as sculling a canoe or lashing a table in the woods. He remembered people's names remarkably well, and was ordinarily friendly and interested in other people. It was difficult not to like him in spite of violent attacks, which were hard to control and not easy to accept.

Bobby lived with his mother and three siblings plus the infant child of his 18-year-old unmarried sister. His mother is of borderline intelligence and can neither read nor write, but she does provide a stable home for the children. She has a steady relationship with a man, not Bobby's father, who is ordinarily kind to the children, except when drinking, which is not infrequent. Bobby has an uncle (the brother of his father) who lives in the same housing project and who is a competent and dependable person and the major potential source of adult strength in Bobby's ecosystem.

Bobby's teeth are in bad condition and, although he is of robust constitution, he is not properly nourished. His diet consists mainly of carbohydrates. Soft drinks and packaged pies are staples in his diet.

At the conference to work out an ecological assessment and enablement plan, the nurse-practitioner suggested that Bobby's episodic violence might be related to epilepsy and asked if this possibility had been considered. A review of available records, including those from the psychiatric hospital, showed no record of an evaluation for epilepsy. At the time the ecological assessment was made, Bobby was taking 300 mg of Thorazine® (chlorpromazine hydrochloride) a day.

If the Cumberland House staff were to succeed with Bobby, neighborhood and community resources would have to be mobilized to help him on weekends and in transition back to regular school. Among assets in the system are Bobby's mother (who, though limited, is always present and always accepting of him), his uncle (perhaps the pivotal person), the nurse-practitioner in the housing project, several staff people at a community center about six blocks away, and, eventually, the special education staff of the elementary school in the neighborhood. The community center agreed to be the pivotal cooperating agency with the Cumberland House staff.

Margaret Smith, liaison teacher-counselor at Cumberland House, was assigned the liaison role. She personally visited all the people mentioned above plus some others and held a planning conference to work out an enablement plan. Present for the conference were the uncle, the nurse-practitioner, and a representative of the community center, plus involved members of the Cumberland House, and an enablement plan was worked out for him.

It might be pointed out that Bobby could have been diagnosed as mentally retarded or emotionally disturbed. His confinement to a psychiatric ward suggests that the term "mentally ill" would not be inappropriate. The actual case records carry such terms as "character disorder," "antisocial," and "violent." But such information is actually of little use in planning a program for Bobby. The assignment of Bobby to a category of handicapping conditions is not only a useless step, but it diverts attention from the

crucial task, which is to work out a detailed plan of things to be done and objectives to be achieved. These are summarized by the following list of specific services to be performed, which constitutes the enablement plan.

The ecological assessment and enablement plan conference identified the following specific steps to be taken in an effort to restore Bobby's ecosystem to an acceptable level of functioning. With respect to each step identified, the plan also specified: (*a*) the person responsible for seeing to it that the task is done; (*b*) the person who will do the work; (*c*) the date by which the task should be accomplished; (*d*) the estimated cost of the service; (*e*) the source of funds to pay for the service; (*f*) the criteria to be used to establish a successful outcome; and (*g*) an identification of required follow-ups (See Table 14.1).

In the conference, the following agreements were reached and a simple record made:

Bobby needs:

1. Admission to Cumberland House, assignment to the Bobcat group, following a preliminary orientation visit by Bobby, his mother, and his uncle.
2. Dental work to repair a number of caries.
3. An adequate nutrition program to be provided by Cumberland House during the week, by the community center on weekends, and by efforts to get Bobby himself to be responsible for choosing good foods.
4. A complete assessment for the possibility of epilepsy.
5. A regime for removing Bobby from tranquilizing drugs, to be supervised by the consulting pediatrician and the nurse-practitioner.
6. An arrangement with the community center and possibly with a local branch of the YMCA for Bobby to have an activity program on weekends.
7. An agreement with the uncle to see Bobby at least three times every weekend, at least for a few minutes each time.
8. A program at Cumberland House that would initially focus primarily on socialization with a gradual introduction of academic tasks. Reading instruction would be avoided at first but a major goal of the Cumberland House effort would be to teach Bobby to read, write, and do arithmetic.
9. Bobby's main responsibility would be to learn to control his temper and all initial arrangements at Cumberland House would be arranged to support him in this effort.

At the case conference, it was agreed that a second conference would be

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TABLE 14.1
Ecological Assessment and Enablement Plan

Client: Robert Washington — Date of Assessment: May 15, 1978
Liaison: Margaret Smith — Date for Review: June 15, 1978

Service required	Who's responsible?	By whom?	By what date?	At what cost?	Source of funds?	Criterion?	Follow-up?
1. Admission to Cumberland House	Margaret Smith	Mother	June 1	$1500 month	Dept. of Mental Health	Return to special education classroom	None
2. Dental work	Nurse-practitioner						
3. Nutrition program	Smith						
4. Assessment for epilepsy	Nurse-practitioner	Dr. Ronald Bates	July 15, 1978	$350	Medicaid	Freedom from seizures	If epileptic, provide medication and periodic checks.
5. Removing from drugs	Smith & Nurse-practitioner						
6. Activity program on weekends	Uncle						
7. Uncle to see Bobby	Uncle						
8. Program at Cumberland House	Smith						
9. Control of temper	Bobby						

held at the end of 60 days and that necessary interim adjustments in the program could be made by Cumberland House staff.

For each of the steps identified, a detailed plan of action was worked out. For example, with respect to the agreement that Bobby should have a thorough assessment for possible epilepsy, the record looked something like this:

Service required: *assessment for possible epilepsy*

1. *Person responsible.* Some one person must assume responsibility for seeing to it that Bobby gets a thorough assessment for possible epilepsy. In some instances it might be the child's parent or guardian, sometimes even the child himself. In Bobby's case, it was decided that the nurse-practitioner would be responsible for getting the examination accomplished and report back to the group. The nurse signs to indicate acceptance of the responsibility.

2. *Service provider.* Arrangements are made by telephone for the assessment to be made by the Developmental Evaluation Clinic of the University Hospital. The contact person at the Clinic is Dr. Ronald Bates. His telephone number is 477-3257.

3. *Target date.* The assessment should be completed within a period of two months, giving a target date of July 15, 1978, by which time it is expected that the needed information will be available.

4. *Cost of service.* Inquiry of the Clinic indicated that the service would probably cost $350, but that additional costs might be incurred if repeated assessments are required.

5. *Source of payment.* Here it is specified where the money is coming from. Sometimes it might be from the child's parents, but Bobby's mother is unable to pay. Arrangements are made with the State Department of Health to pay for the service out of funds of the Crippled Children's Program, with reimbursement from Medicaid.

6. *Criterion check.* Here is specified what standard is to be met by the service provided. All of the above (Items 1-5) are "inputs" or "processes"; here, in Item 6, is registered the expected output or product. An ultimate goal, for example, might be to have Bobby reading at a grade level 1 year below his expected level. The objective of the assessment for epilepsy is to determine whether or not he has epilepsy. If he does have seizures, the objective would be to get the seizures under control by appropriate medication.

7. *Follow-up.* At the time of the initial planning, it may be desirable to arrange for future services when these can be anticipated. For example, if the assessment showed that Bobby needs anticonvulsant drugs, plans

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would need to be made to have periodic assessment of the effects of the drugs on his blood and on his behavior. It may be anticipated, in addition, that Bobby might be helped sufficiently to return to the special education program in the neighborhood elementary school. If so, contact with the school would be made at the outset and arrangements made for Bobby to visit the school from time to time, to identify himself with it and to get acquainted with some staff and children.

8. *Conversion to the classical categories.* If for any reason there is a need to report on services rendered in terms of specific handicapping conditions, as is required by Public Law 94-140-142, Education for All Handicapped Children, it is possible by a conversion formula (based on service requirements) to arrive at a conventional classification category, without having to use resources for a conventional diagnosis. Thus a child receiving a particular pattern of services may be designated, if necessary, as mentally retarded, orthopedically handicapped, visually impaired, emotionally disturbed, etc.

The enablement plan calls for checks on progress on specific dates set for the delivery of particular services. In addition, the conference will agree on a date by which the total service plan must be reviewed, say in 6 mo, or 9 mo, or 1 year, after which a new enablement plan must be worked out. It so happened in Bobby's case that a review at the end of 9 mo indicated that he had made no progress in learning to read. While there had been considerable improvement in his behavior and a decline in frequency of violent outbursts, they still occurred and were frequently associated with incidents involving his inability to read. The prospects of his returning to a regular school were not promising, and a particularly violent series of episodes led to a proposal that he be committed to the state mental hospital. Recognizing the immediate and long-term costs of such commitment led to the decision to expend a substantial amount of money on a short-term, individually designed program to teach Bobby to read. He was removed from formal instruction with his group and placed in an individually designed tutorial program with an expert teacher and two graduate students to prepare daily schedules of instruction following an operant-conditioning paradigm. Though the costs would be heavy for the 6 months' effort, they would be considerably less than long-term hospitalization. Bobby responded remarkably well to the operant program. It began at the level of making simple differentiations among letters of the alphabet and among digits, and, with Bobby's notable success, proceeded rapidly to word recognition, simple sentence reading, and simple arithmetic processes. Bobby's at-least-average intelligence was brought into play, and he learned to read and to cipher within the 6 months' period. Another formal review

led to placement of Bobby in a special education class for the educable retarded in the elementary school and a new ecological assessment and enablement plan that drew on the natural resources of his life setting and permitted the gradual retirement of Cumberland House from an active role in the ecosystem. These notes, with appropriate alterations to conceal individual identities, are the reconstruction of a situation of a child who entered Cumberland House in 1967. Bobby continued in special classes in the public school until he was 16. He left school and got a job that he has held for 5 years. He has been married for 3 years and has a 2-year-old child. He occasionally visits Cumberland House to keep up old friendships.

The Liaison Function

In order for the system to work well, a single person must be made responsible for carrying out the plan. This person can be referred to as a *case manager*, or a *consultant* to the child's parents or to the child or adolescent. The assignment of such a person implies that people other than the "experts" are expected, in time, to assume full responsibility for managing the child's life. In the United States a new professional role, that of *liaison specialist*, is emerging. The liaison specialist may best be thought of as a facilitator, a gatherer of information, a mobilizer of resources, an enabler of other people, but not as an expert who takes over responsibility from the parents or the child or the adolescent. The liaison specialist also records the ecological assessment and enablement plan, monitors the execution of the plan, arranges for revisions when they are necessary, assures that the plan is reviewed periodically, and withdraws as soon as the ecological system is judged to be capable of functioning with reasonable adequacy without special assistance.

Thus far, what has been described is a local-service management scheme. Bobby has been classified with respect to the services required to help him return to a reasonably normal pattern of development, according to the best judgment of people important in his life, including the professional people who have been mobilized to help. But the classification system has advantages beyond that of providing assistance to an individual child. It is also an instrument for planning and for assessing accountability.

To assess accountability, each service requirement is reviewed and a record made of what actually happened. Have Bobby's teeth been filled? Were they filled by Dr. Bates or by someone else? Did the person responsible for having the teeth filled actually fulfill his responsibility? What was the actual cost? Where did the money come from, in fact? Were the agreed-on criteria successfully met? Were appropriate plans made for follow-up?

The system provides a powerful means of assuring that Bobby gets the help he needs and that the service-delivery system is working well.

Computerization of the Classification System

It is entirely feasible to translate the conference plans immediately into computer language to avoid the expensive requirement of note-taking, dictating, and transcribing records. From the coded data, the computer could then supply a written account of the agreements reached in the planning conference in one or more languages, as might be required. Each service requirement would be recorded. Sufficient copies of the local program would be made to provide a record for Bobby himself, for his mother and uncle, the liaison specialist, the Cumberland House staff, the nurse-practitioner, and all people who are essential to the success of the plan.

The system constitutes, on the one hand, a way of thinking about handicapped children and their families, and about the services they require for the child to develop in accordance with reasonable expectations, and on the other hand, a planning, management, and accountability system of considerable power and wide scope. While computers are not required by a small local agency (school, mental health center, clinic, hospital) to use the system, it is nevertheless designed for ready adaptation to data processing equipment, either local or national in scope. Any major state or national effort to improve services to handicapped children and their families will require precisely the kind of orderly information the system is designed to supply.

The data provided by programs for individual children can be aggregated for city, state, national, or international planning purposes. Specifically, this aggregation would provide data on the kinds of services that are required for handicapped children by school systems, by cities, counties, states, or the nation as a whole. It would also provide a data-based estimate of the costs of such services. Based on actual current and past treatment load, realistic projections could be made of the future need for dentists, pediatricians, or remedial reading instructors. It would yield a data base for assessing the adequacy of the service delivery system, and so on.

It is important not to think of the proposed ecologically oriented, service-based classification system as simply a management information system. It is that, indeed, and a powerful one as well, but, more important, it is a way of conceptualizing the problem of delivering services to handicapped children that has substantial merits whether computers are used or not.

Limitations of the Proposed System

Let us now return to an earlier observation; that any classification system should be responsive to the question, "classification for what purpose?" An ecologically oriented, service-based classification system, as here described, will be useful in improving the delivery of services. Just that and nothing more. The system will be altogether inadequate for research and for epidemiological and demographic studies, except for research on service delivery. A system for the classification of handicapped individuals for the purpose of research or epidemiological and demographic studies will have different requirements than a system designed to improve service delivery. Data generated for the purpose of service delivery are grievously flawed for purposes of understanding, for example, the extent of impairment of functions in the population, or for purposes of assessing the effectiveness of an intervention program such as that represented by deinstitutionalization and mainstreaming. Clearly, there is need for a classification system that would permit us to assess accurately the status of populations and the results of intervention programs, else there would be no markers at all to indicate whether or not social investments are paying off. Over time, planners and policy makers will need to know, and to know confidently on the basis of reliable data, the extent to which specified populations meet specified criteria with respect to cognitive, social, emotional, visual, auditory, orthopedic, and other functions. To obtain answers to such important questions, a yet-to-be-devised classification system will be needed. It, too, will probably find of little use the traditional categories of handicapping conditions. Such a classification system should have several characteristics, as follows:

1. It should be based on selected samples of individuals and not on the universe of people receiving services. The sample should be stratified and sensitive to such issues as age, geography, socioeconomic status, and ethnic composition. The information gathered should be based on a comprehensive array of functions regarded as important in assessing the development of individuals.
2. The unit of observation should be the individual or the individual in setting and not the case, intervention, treatment, or episode. The current practice of recording cases rather than individuals greatly distorts social, educational, and health statistics.
3. The information should be gathered in accordance with standard procedures performed by trained assessors and the results reported on standard protocols. Finally, the standard measures of functions and samples of populations should be repeated at specific intervals, perhaps every 4 years.

in order to generate the time-series data so essential for the measurement of change.

The task of developing a classification system for research or demographic studies requires special talents; its development should proceed independently of efforts to develop an ecologically oriented, service-based classification system.

Analysis of the Functional Basis of Opposition to the Proposal

Any effort to supplant an entrenched classification system with a new one must reckon with the full range of reasons, or of rationalizations, for adhering to the old system. This paper argues that existing classification schemes have serious deficits in planning, delivering, and accounting for services to handicapped children. Such was a major conclusion of the extensive Project on Classification of Exceptional Children, the results of which are reported in the *Futures of Children* and in two companion volumes (Hobbs, 1975). That study yielded an unanticipated new understanding of the social purposes served by existing categorical classification schemes. The two social functions served by the familiar categories are the control of deviance and the organization of social groups. These purposes are well served, and the results highly valued, so that one can confidently expect opposition to proposals to replace the system with a more rational one, even if it should promise to improve service delivery substantially.

All social organizations develop ways to control deviance. They find ways to reduce internal stress produced by group members who depart so far from group norms that they are perceived as threatening the integrity of the organization itself. One way to reduce the discord produced by a deviant individual is to put the person in a special category, remove the person from the group entirely, or significantly reduce his or her identification with it. Current schemes for classifying handicapped children serve this control function very well. By placing a child in a special category, it becomes possible to treat the child in ways that would not be tolerated were he or she a fully accepted member of the group. Classification thus serves to legitimize exclusion, reduce opportunity for participation, and sanction other forms of discrimination.

Existing schemes for the classification of handicapped children also provide categories for the organization of social institutions. The categories provide a conceptual framework for writing legislation, organizing government bureaus, channeling the flow of funds, mobilizing advocacy groups, and defining professional territories and agency domains. The categories

are accepted as representing an enduring reality, and they are not likely to be abandoned even in the face of overwhelming evidence of their deficiencies.

But one can be sure of this: Something will not be abandoned for nothing. Existing classification schemes, for all their imperfections, will continue to be used until there is developed a new way of conceptualizing the problem and a new technology to aid in its solution. Both concept and method, rationale and technology, substance and process, are embodied in this proposal to develop an ecologically oriented, service-based system for the classification of handicapped children.

Prototype Models

An ecologically oriented, service-based system (not computerized) for working with emotionally disturbed children has been in operation for about fifteen years in the Re-ED schools in the United States, of which there are about 20 in different parts of the country (Hobbs, 1966). These are residential schools for moderately to severely disturbed children and adolescents. The school programs are based on educational rather than psychiatric concepts, and they place a heavy emphasis on improving the transactions between the child and his or her environment through appropriate changes in each and in mobilizing existing resources to restore the child's ecosystem to effective functioning. Because of the importance of this emphasis in the Re-ED schools, there has been created over the years a new professional role called the liaison teacher-counselor. As the name suggests, it is the function of the liaison teacher-counselor to identify sources of discord and distress in the child's ecosystem, to work with others to identify needs for change and for services, to monitor the system in the course of its transformation, and to transfer—as soon as possible—this coordinating and facilitating responsibility to someone else, usually the parents of the child. By any criterion, the schools have been remarkably successful (Hobbs, Note 1; Weinstein, 1969).

One of the most conspicuous differences between the Re-ED program and traditional residential treatment programs is the substantially shorter length of stay made possible largely by the heavy investment in making the child's ecosystem work, approximately 6 mo as contrasted with 18 mo or longer in traditional programs. Three professional people called teacher-counselors work intensively with groups of 8–10 children or adolescents. One teacher-counselor is responsible for the day program, one for the night program, and one for the liaison program. Thus one-third of the pro-

fessional resources of the schools is invested in making the ecosystem work.

Although the concepts and techniques presented in this chapter were worked out in a residential setting, it is obvious that the ideas can be applied in other situations not involving residential care. A Re-ED school in Kentucky has, in addition to its regular liaison staff, an adjunct group of liaison workers who operate in 10 counties served by the school. When a child or adolescent gets into serious trouble with family, school, or community, the liaison worker studies the situation, engages the help of essential people, and works out with them an ecological assessment and enablement plan. Their goal is to make it unnecessary for the child or adolescent to be removed from his natural setting and placed in residential care. The program is working very well and at a cost considerably less than residential placement.

The Prevention-Intervention Program involving several counties in middle Tennessee is another example of the successful application of ecological strategies (Cantrell & Cantrell, 1974). This program, based in the public schools, sought to identify at an early stage children and young people who were beginning to manifest adjustment difficulties. In each instance, an ecological assessment was made, an enablement plan worked out, and resources mobilized to bring the child and his ecosystem up to an acceptable level of functioning.

The idea of an ecologically oriented, service-based classification system has developed independently in several other programs in the United States. One of the most interesting of these is the Eleanor Roosevelt Developmental Services in New York state, which began operating in 1970 as a prototype for a community-based service program for mentally retarded children, adolescents, and adults (LaFave, Woodhouse, & Grunberg, Note 2). The program, which served all of the retarded people in a large community utilizing a strategy emphasizing prevention, collaboration, advocacy, and direct service, was remarkably effective in sustaining mentally retarded invididuals in the community and making institutionalization unnecessary. An interesting feature of the Eleanor Roosevelt program was its reliance on a computer to facilitate case management. Insofar as we know, this is the first extensive effort to use the remarkable capabilities of computers to operate what was essentially an ecologically oriented, service-based classification and service system.

There are two other examples of large-scale, computer-managed, child and adolescent service programs not yet reported. One is in Massachusetts and the other in Connecticut. In Massachusetts, the state's public school program for handicapped children and youth has abandoned the traditional categories of handicapping conditions and has substituted a planning, management, and accountability system based on the services actually provided to individuals. The system works very well, but it is confined to the public schools of the state. In Connecticut, a further advance in the application of ecological concepts and computer management technologies is being worked out. All state services involving children and youth, including education, health, corrections, and welfare, are committed to developing a common classification and service system that will have the characteristics described in this chapter: an emphasis on the child or adolescent in his or her normal setting, the preparation of an ecological assessment and service delivery plan, the development of procedures for tracking service delivery, and the provision of information required for local case management, long-term planning, and accountability recording. A computer capability essential for operating such a large program is now midway in development. The Connecticut experience will clearly provide the single best model for the development of an ecologically oriented, service-based system for the classification of handicapped children.

All current systems for the classification of handicapped children, including children called emotionally disturbed, have two serious deficiencies: (*a*) they fail to give adequate attention to the transactional relationships between the child and important people in his or her life—parents, siblings, teachers, neighbors, and others; and (*b*) they fail to provide a basis for linking problems with interventions and, in consequence, they constitute a major impediment to the effective delivery of services to handicapped children. The ecologically oriented, service-based system for the classification of handicapped children proposed here solves these problems. Several demonstration projects have established the effectiveness and practicality of the system for use in agencies providing services to children and their families. Pilot projects now underway promise to establish the soundness of the system as a basis of state and national programs for planning, funding, monitoring, and auditing services to handicapped children. The beneficiaries, in time, will be the handicapped children of the nation.

Reference Notes

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2. LaFave, H. G., Woodhouse, R., & Grunberg, F. A new generation of programming for children with developmental disabilities and the retarded of all ages. Unpublished report. Schenectady, N. Y.: Eleanor Roosevelt Development Center.

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